UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Words Are Not Enough: Stories of Indigenous Learning

By

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©

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH: STORIES OF INDIGENOUS LEARNING by WAYNE GORMAN** in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION in Social and Cultural Context of Education.

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Date Jan 22/99

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Native Elders and their wisdom. To my granddaughters who have taught me how to see as a child again and the participants without whose support this work would not have been completed.

ABSTRACT

This study gives voice to a variety of Indigenous people(s) and in giving them a voice told part of my story. These are stories of disharmony and harmony and of attempts to maintain balance within a formal educational milieu. These are stories of life journeys, of reflecting, searching, discovering and healing. This is an ongoing story of understanding, interrelatedness, of struggle and of hope.

The research examines systemic inequitable learning opportunities within a theory of marginalization using a social-psychological interpretative framework. It discusses the impact of Western expansionism and cultural interpenetration of Indigenous ways of learning. It uses Native storytelling of lived educational experiences to demonstrate that there are different ethical behaviours that affect learning and teaching of Indigenous students. The research was conducted on the basis of Native ethics and multiple perceptions.

The study was undertaken for several reasons. To provide a means for Indigenous students to express their perception of formal schooling and acknowledge that there are more Indigenous people in Canadian society than those legally defined by the Government. To acknowledge that different Indigenous cultural worldviews need to be recognized and respected as valued forms of knowledge. To provide an interpretative framework that could be used as a 'bridging tool' between our cultural boundedness. Finally, to develop a research design which was more compatible with Aboriginal ethics.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Jacqueline Oker is a Beaver Native from Peterson Crossing, British Columbia.

Remember

It was not long ago
I was jailed at the residential school
for a crime I did not commit.

The black robe guards they beat the
sun dance,
chicken dance,
jingle dance,
fancy dance,
and hoop dance
out of me.
These dances are evil they yelled.

The sacred language they whipped out of me.
Speak this instead
they ordered.
Confused,
and terrified
I surrendered my tongue.

Brainwashed to take commands like a dog
I did not know who I was
when released from prison
many moons later.

Squat over there on your land
if you can't make anything of yourself
they said.

Crouching on mother earth,
I faintly recall the dreamer's songs,
the dances,
the legend of the spider,
the hunting ways of my people.
I could not fully connect.
I was alone.

One day while sitting with an elder
trying to talk
the black robe people arrived.
Speak your language,
tell the legends,
sing your songs,
dance your dance,
record this for future generations.

How can I,
I replied.

You pounded these sinful ways out of me
Remember? Jacqueline Oker 1996

She dedicated "Remember" to the memory of her grandmother, Alice Askoty (Amma), who had given Jacqueline unending inspiration. When I read this poem as an Iroquois-Irish person, it evoked images and words from my own fifty year journey of feelings of sadness, sorrow and loss. I believe that this poem epitomizes the dilemma of many Indigenous students and that it provides a broader perception of education in North America. As I thought about this poem, I realized that public or mainstream education is really a story about losing ourselves as Aboriginal people and for some of us about finding ourselves again.

As I listened to those who told me their story I soon realized that I was also listening to pieces of my own story. Explaining this loss in "Remember" presented obstacles for this is the third time that I have tried to write this story. Each time I wrote it, it seemed wrong because the very phenomenon that this research tries to understand is implicitly part of the prescribed mainstream education. In the academic narrative, one needs to formulate a research question in a particular fashion, follow a particular research design with all its rules and regulations, then present it in such a way that it is validated by a prescribed culture. In doing so, the academic narrative shapes and defines the lived story within a particular cultural perception that too often devalues other ways of constructing and presenting understanding. Consequently Universities reward and punish by either granting or withholding a degree. I recognize the need for academic standards and that linear sequential compartmentalization is a function of the English language. Valued logical presentation is inherently culturally bound in the educational system which creates feelings of frustration, confusion, and loss of interest when viewed from an other cultural perspective. This statement is intended to point out how one's cultural system interpenetrated with another may lead some people to feelings of disappointment, bewilderment and withdrawal. Regarding my own frustration and confusion I spoke to several Elders about my feeling of

imbalance and the need to center myself. In their quiet way they listened to me; they didn't tell me what to do, or what I needed to do, or how to do it: rather, they told me stories. This study is a story, within stories about Indigenous people(s)' *inner view* (Kvale, 1996) of their experiences in the public school system. I have attempted to give voice to a variety of Indigenous people(s) and in giving them a voice told part of my story. These are stories of disharmony and harmony and of attempts to maintain balance within themselves. These are stories of life journeys, of reflecting, searching, discovering, and healing. This is an ongoing story of understanding, interrelatedness, of struggle and of hope.

Research Themes

The research question resulted from a personal awareness that developed while taking graduate classes that are based upon two divergent cultural practices; one, I would characterize as Indigenous and the other as mainstream social constructs. In the mainstream classes, rules and expectations of graduate argumentative participation, competitiveness, status projection and judgement afforded those with that ethic of discourse a more fulfilling learning opportunity than the one experienced by those without that discourse ethic. This awareness is what Gardner calls a "crystallizing experience" (Gardner, 1993, p. 29) and what I have termed "an unrecognized systemic inequitable learning opportunity." The participants in both classes displayed particular cultural biases with regard to culturally based talk, logic and discussion, rules of participation, ethics of discourse, talking and discourse patterns, purpose of questioning, tone of voice, socializing ethic, body language and posturing, teaching/learning styles, different linguistic structures, and differential world views, which they deemed necessary for a successful learning environment (Wilson, 1997). Those "without" tended to participate less in group discussions than those with the ethic. The lack of acknowledgement and practice of an Indigenous ethic, rooted in the fact that not everyone learns in the same way or at the same pace, in the value of respect

where everyone has a right to speak and be heard, and in the awareness that everyone is on a path of continuous learning, created situations of unequal learning opportunity.

The other significant event occurred when I had the opportunity to converse with students of mixed ethnicity from several undergraduate classes who stated that "they were confused and felt that they were stupid," and that they "didn't understand or have enough time to understand what they were being taught." Although theses feelings may occur with non-natives, they appear to be more evident among native people(s). "I felt sick in high school. The teachers made me feel ashamed of who I was. Growing up, everything was one-sided" (Looking Horse, 1997, p. 32). The common complaint of the undergraduate students was that they felt they had to deconstruct and reconstruct everything for it to make sense. This seemed true in either approach, Western or Native. I explained to them: "Even after all these years of learning and education, I still had to reconstruct to make sense of the world." We then talked about the concepts of marginalization and of conflicting worldviews, to show that what they were experiencing was perfectly natural and to illustrate the need to develop adaptive strategies and skills. Weeks later, I spoke to several students who now believed that they had gained some understanding through our previous discussions of the contradictions creating their confusion; they felt better about themselves and were doing better in their classes. In order to clarify the ethics and commitments we hold as educators, we need to comprehend that the ethics and behaviour imposed on Aboriginal children through education today, the residential schools, urban schools and orphanages are fundamental systemic mechanisms that continue to marginalize generations of Indigenous children in inequitable learning situations in the same manner as it did in the past.

Research Question

I attempted to capture these themes in the question: What inequitable learning situations, if any exist in public education for Indigenous students? The question really did not make a lot of sense to me until I recorded the inner views of seven indigenous people. The significance

emerged as the interviewees responded to "Tell me the story of your educational experience?" Their stories discussed their loss of Indigenous words, their family connections, adapting to another way of thinking, an awareness of the need to survive and their attempts to regain their balance. Why is it that some Natives are out of balance? How can I express this idea of imbalance so that it is meaningful to Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people alike?

The Importance of the Question

Like Bull (1991), "I felt that someone had to [continue] promoting the values that are inherent in the Indian situation"(p. 3). It is important to demonstrate to students, and have educators become aware, that there are recognized and unrecognized systemic inequitable learning opportunities inherent in the educational system. These are culturally based ethical behaviours (Phillips, 1982) which are not always obvious but form part of what has been called the hidden curriculum. Once identified within the institutional structures of the verbal and para-verbal communication patterns, they may be used as a means of increasing our knowledge about the curriculum, teaching, and learning.

Significance of the Study

This study was undertaken for several reasons. One, to provide a means for Indigenous students to express their perception of their schooling experience, and two, to acknowledge that there are more Indigenous people in Canadian society than those legally defined as First Nation, Metis, Aboriginal People, Inuit, Bill C-31, Status Indians and Non-status who experience real and valuable cultural differences between themselves and other people(s) in Canadian society and who have not been acknowledged in any way. I thought that it was important to acknowledge that different Indigenous cultural worldviews need to be recognized and respected as valuable and valued sources or forms of knowledge. As Wilcox (1988) points out "... an understanding of

social and cultural wholes is crucial for an understanding" (p. 304) of what happens in the classroom and subsequently of how people learn. Using the concept of the "marginal man" (Stonequist, 1937) as an interpretative framework allowed me to make sense of my world and bridge the gap between my cultural boundedness and my challenges with learning. I also wanted to share this "bridging tool" as a means of understanding those explicit and implicit influences that create imbalance for some Indigenous students and hopefully make it understandable to non-Indigenous people. This study does not address the issues faced by immigrant minorities, although some parallel concerns exist as there is a fundamental difference between minorities making a conscious choice to immigrate to Canada and a people(s) who already inhabited North America. Another purpose of the study is to develop and evaluate a particular research design which appears compatible with Aboriginal ethics while gaining some research experience in cross-cultural research.

Interpretative Framework

In attempting to understand my feelings of loss and confusion I needed to draw on broader perspectives to give me a sense of the development of this continuing foreign cultural penetration of Indigenous ways of knowing. When I returned to school in 1997, after being in the workforce for over thirty years, I remembered a book I read in 1972, entitled The Marginal Man: A Study in Personality and Cultural Conflict by Everett V. Stonequist, which is a social psychological study of the development of mixed bloods, cultural penetration and the concept of marginalization. According to Stonequist (1937) of the University of Chicago, the marginal man "is one who is poised in psychological uncertainty between two (or more) social worlds; reflecting in his soul the discords and harmonies, repulsion and attractions of these worlds, one of which is often "dominant" over the other; within which membership is implicitly if not explicitly based upon birth or ancestry (race or nationality); and where exclusion removes the individual from a system of group relations"(p. 8). The critical point is " the marginal personality is most

clearly portrayed in those individuals who are unwittingly initiated into two or more historic traditions, languages, political loyalties, moral codes, or religions" (Stonequist, 1937, p. 3). The dual social connections are reflected in the type of life, the nature of achievements or failures, self-conception, and many of these social attitudes and aspirations. This dualism may not always constitute a personal problem because human beings are naturally flexible with multiple potentialities, which enables them to fit into the most varied of culture patterns and social organizations (pp. 3-4). It is the conflict of groups possessing different cultures, which is the determining influence and the typical traits are social-psychological, rather than cultural, in nature. Accordingly, when persons have an uncertain status in two or more groups they become a distinct type of marginalized personality, irrespective of the particular content of the cultures. The "marginal man" describes one whose fate is to be condemned to live in two societies and in two, not merely different but antagonistic cultures: "...[F]atally condemned to grow up under the influence of two traditions. In that case, his mind is the crucible in which two different and refractory cultures may be said to melt and, either wholly or in part, fuse" (Stonequist,1937, p. vii, p. xv; Cordero,1997, p. 84).

I disagree that fate has condemned Indigenous peoples to live in two antagonistic societies; rather, it is a human condition, and a lack of respect and acknowledgement which perpetuates and reinforces the idea of antagonistic societies. Stonequist's study consisted of a social psychological analysis of the development of "mixed bloods" in Eurasians or Anglo-Indians of India, the Cape Coloured of South Africa, the Mulattoes of the United States, the Coloured people of Jamaica, the Indo-Europeans of Java, the Part Hawaiians, and the Metis of Brazil. The theories of marginal man and marginal situations were particularly meaningful for me in providing a general framework of social change delineating psychological trends which emerged as Stonequist related them to Western expansion and colonization. They provided me with some understanding of my confusion as a descendent of mixed Native and Celtic ancestry. It also gave me a sense of who I was as one of the "forgotten Indians"; those Indigenous people who

were taken from their families, placed in foster homes or orphanages and never told of their Indigenous ancestry. Those who had their heritage stolen, (Fournier & Crey, 1997), only to regain it after some happen-stance set them on a journey of rediscovery and balance.

Stonequist (1937) argues that the expansion of Europeans during the last five hundred years has brought about changes more dramatic than in any period in the world's history (p. xiv; Berkhofer, 1988, pp. 521-547). He states that Western expansionism has resulted in the diffusion of European blood, European culture and European ideas which have transformed the world from a collection of slowly interacting races, political units and distinctive cultures into a condition where dynamic interchange and mutual economic, if not political and cultural interdependence, dominates (Stonequist, 1937, pp. 221-222). This expansion brought about an interpenetration of peoples and a fusion of cultures which have, at certain times and under certain conditions, produced a unique personality type – "the marginal man" (Stonequist, 1937, pp. xiv-xv) where the individual is caught within a conflict of cultures. He concluded that, because of this expansion, the clash of codes and philosophies can be profound and severe for the group that does the major share of the adjusting. Stonequist points out that the initial contrast is not only in a conflict of social groups within a culture system but also in conflicts between two cultural systems where each has its own subordinate groups. As a result, individuals may have had to readjust their lives with regard to the language used to communicate, the accepted religious beliefs, the moral code followed, the manner in which living is earned, the government to which allegiance is given, as well as in the subtler aspects of personality (Stonequist, 1937, pp. 216-217; Wiltse, 1997). All such influences led directly or indirectly to a modification of fundamental institutions. It is a situation where social groups possessing initially distinct cultures are now seeking to adjust themselves to the other group. The groups are in a relationship of inequality, whether or not this is openly asserted (Stonequist, 1937, p. 121). During the initial contact in North America the Europeans were in a minority position, but this gradually changed through migration to a dominant position. The individuals of the newly subordinate group, whose social contacts have

led them to be partially assimilated and psychologically identified with the dominant group without being fully accepted, are in a marginal situation. Consequently, Stonequist (1937) says they are on the margin of each society, partly in and partly out, and mentally experiencing the contrasts, tensions, or conflicts of the two cultures (p. 121). This contrast of being partly in and partly out of each, is the condition that creates imbalance. This is particularly the case when the clash of societies is fundamental and inclusive; when it derives from historic differences of race and nationality (p. 121). Such cultural conflict is particularly evident in the urban centers where maximum cultural interpenetration occurs (Stonequist, 1937, p. 213).

Cultural conflict is simply a form of group conflict where the source of the conflict lies in the cultural differences. This difference is interpreted in moral terms. Two systems of mores are struggling, each commanding the loyalty of its members. Fundamentally, it is a struggle for existence. Each group, particularly the one in control, seeks to protect itself by keeping the other in its place. This is a matter of maintaining social distance; with the advance of the subordinate group, the dominant group responds with fear, antipathy, and racial prejudice. Racial prejudice is a collective attitude directed to the other racial group as a whole, so individual members of the subordinate group may be treated in terms of the attitude toward the whole group and not in accordance with the individual's own personality traits. However, some members of the dominant group know intimately the individual from the subordinate group and thus may treat the individual in terms of individual traits.

Thus, for Stonequist (1937), cultural conflict and differential assimilation are the basic factors in creating the marginal man and are a function of social conditions (pp. 214-215). The marginal type appears in every race, among mixed groups as well as among racial hybrids, and in almost every culture. The common factor is not biological but a certain social situation. The physical appearance facilitates the focussing of race prejudice, reduces social contact, and so impedes the natural process of assimilation (p. 211) of both groups. It is cultural duality which is the determining influence as the adjustment pattern seldom provides complete cultural guidance

and support needed for the individual to accommodate the shifting social order (p. 217). The fundamental notion is that the individual's personality, while based on instincts, temperament and the endocrine balance, acquires its final form under the influence of his or her conception of self. The person's self-concept is determined by the role assigned to him or her in society, and by the opinions and attitudes which others in that society form of this person. The individual's conception of self is, in this sense, not an individual but a social product (p. xvii). Marginal Man is concerned ultimately and fundamentally more, "... with a personality type, than with a social process, the process of acculturation"(Stonequist, 1937, p. xviii). A comparative study of the available evidence suggests that the marginal persons can go in one of three directions in personal evolution in response to marginal situations:

> In general these situations favour individual development in one of three major directions: assimilation into the dominant group; assimilation into the subordinate group; or some form of accommodation, perhaps only temporary and incomplete, between two groups. Since the situation itself is dynamic, the individual may change his response from one time to another (Stonequist, 1937, p. 131).

Experiencing the conflict of cultures is the turning point and is the period when the characteristic personality traits first appear. The experience itself is a shock and the marginalized persons find their social world disorganized. Personal relations and cultural forms, which were previously taken for granted, suddenly become problematic for those who do not know quite how to act (Stonequist, 1937, p. 140). The experience of students in culturally differentiated classes would be an example of this phenomenon. "There is a feeling of confusion, of loss of direction, of being overwhelmed" (p. 141). The first phase of their general life cycle is not being sensitive about their race or nationality because they lack "race-consciousness". "Race-consciousness is a form of self-consciousness - a consciousness which arises in the person when the person becomes aware that others regard that person in a certain way because he or she belongs to a particular racial group" (Stonequist, 1937, p.123). The second phase involves becoming marginal. It consists of a "crisis, a situation where usual habits and attitudes break down to some extent. The

individual must then "find themselves" again. They must reconstruct their concept of themselves as well as their place or role in society. The two are interrelated; they are two aspects of the personal-social process" (Stonequist, 1937, p. 123). The third phase consists of their adjustment response to particular situations. They may reach a successful adjustment, which reestablishes their balance and thus eliminates their marginal state of mind. They may reach a satisfactory adjustment, then thrown back again into a condition of conflict. "Or, [they] may assume a role which, while it organizes [their] life, does not completely free [their] consciousness from [their] situation: [they] remain a partially adjusted marginal man" (p. 123). The situation may be so overwhelming that they are unable to adjust and so becomes disorganized. As a result of their in-between situation, marginal people may become acute and able critics of the dominant group and its culture when they combine the knowledge and insight of the insider with the critical attitude of the outsider. Their analysis is not necessarily objective because there may be too much emotional tension within to make such an attitude easy to achieve. However, they may become skillful in noting the contradictions and the "hypocrisies" in the dominant culture (pp. 154-155). That is when the gap between the ethic of each culture and its actual achievement becomes apparent. In Stonequist's (1937) words:

> Being a marginal man always involves something of a problem ... at its minimum it denotes a subtle, perhaps indefinable, sense of estrangement and malaise, an inner isolation related by his social life. The maladjustment may be purely inner. It may be so well controlled or concealed that others do not realize what is going on. If they sense something unusual, they are unaware of the cause. At the other extreme are those conflicts, which are severe enough to demoralize the individual, throwing him into continual restlessness, and initiating a process of disorganization, which ends in dissipation, crime, suicide or psychosis. To some individuals the situation is a challenge bringing about greater mental activity as a compensation for a questionable status. A certain degree of personal maladjustment is inherent in the marginal situation, but it varies both in terms of individuals and situations. At a minimum it consists of an inner strain and malaise, a feeling of isolation or of not quite belonging. This may be subtle and evanescent in quality – coming and going with particular experiences and shifting moods. (pp. 159 -160, p. 201)

The educational experience provides the shock whereby these individuals find their social world disorganized and personal relations and cultural forms, which were previously taken for granted, suddenly become problematic and they do not know how to act. There is a feeling for some of confusion, of loss of direction and of being overwhelmed. It consists of a crisis situation where usual habits and attitudes break down to some extent. These individuals must then find themselves, again, within the educational milieu.

The lack of acknowledgement and awareness of the practice of an Indigenous ethic in mainstream education creates these marginal situations and marginal personalities in some Indigenous people(s), which creates imbalance until the they successfully adjusts which reestablishes balance.

It is the conflict of perceived ethical behaviours in all aspects of the educational milieu that create marginal situations for marginalized students. The ethics are perceived to be inherent not only in the cultural context of teaching and learning styles but in the theories and research designs of the dominant culture. For the marginalized researcher the selection of a research methodology and design becomes problematic because they are confronted with another marginal situation. In this cross-cultural study, the researcher is confronted with the ethics implicit in the research methodologies developed in the dominant culture which may be in conflict with Indigenous ethics of the researcher and the community studied. Therefore the marginal researcher needs to find a methodology that maintains the researcher's balance.

Chapter 2

A Research Story

Institutional Narratives

As a researcher of mixed heritage, one of the major difficulties in completing this research project was selecting the methodology that would suit my Indigenous ethics. I evaluated different approaches in the field of qualitative research, including hermeneutics, ethnography, and action research, in an attempt to identity those concepts that would not only respect scholarly approaches but close the communication gap between mainstream and Indigenous approaches to knowledge. I do not use any one of these approaches as the single methodology, I rather, certain concepts are blended to bridge the two worldviews. Hence, only the concepts that I believed provide this bridging are included. This is not a critique of these methodologies but simply an outlining of the concepts found in these methods which were relevant and useful to my understanding in bridging the communication gap and maintaining an Indigenous balance.

Hermeneutics and Dialectic Methodology

There is an acceptance of a hermeneutical and dialectical methodology which holds that individual constructions can be elicited and refined through comparing and contrasting worldviews (Giddens, 1984, 1990; Kelly, 1990; Messer, Sass, & Woolfolk, 1988; Klemm, 1986; Hollinger, 1985; Mueller-Vollmer, 1985). The idea of hermeneutics as a kind of "phenomenology of the between" in placing one's analytical self between two worldviews has a particular meaning for this project. Stonequist (1937) saw the role of hybrids as a "buffer" or "cultural broker" (pp. 18-24) and in this regard hermeneutics and dialectic methodology provide an interesting interpretative framework. It was appealing to me because of my mixed heritage and seemed to accommodate my situation of being "partly in and partly out" of two cultural traditions. I was not really in the emic or etic perspective; while I practice one form of Indigenous spirituality and live

by an Indigenous ethic, I was socialized in the White world. However, I rejected the total use of this methodology because it is primarily a comparative approach that assumes that one is culturally bound and is attempting to understand one's own culture by looking at another culture. The hermeneutics approach presupposes that there are two distinct cultures that can be compared, while I suggest that the interpenetration of cultures, as they currently exist, has become so pervasive that one cannot find two distinct cultures in North America to compare. In this study the definition of culture is taken from C. Pompana, a Native psychological anthropologist, (personal communication, October 3, 1998) who states that:

> Culture is an anthropological term and refers primarily to - all those aspects of human beings which are nonbiological that are transmittable through socialization and thereby, the learning processes. It includes artistic, social, ideological, religious patterns, and various techniques to either master the environment or live harmoniously with the environment. The term culture is used to indicate a social grouping that is smaller than a civilization but larger than an industry. Culture is not organic and can therefore only exist only where there is human life because it depends on the perpetuation of the learning aspect of the socialization processes. Thus, a culture is directly proportional to a group's ability to "pass it on" (to transmit it). Therefore, the term culture is usually used as a collective noun to refer to the symbolic and learned aspects of human society, including language, custom, and convention, and so on. Cultural anthropology (including educational anthropology) takes as its special province the analysis of culture.

If culture is defined as a socialization process and learned behaviour, Stonequist may be correct in his assertion that hybrid cultures are the predominate form of culture in the twentieth century. One would have to disentangle those learned behaviours from several cultures to find two or more that might be comparable. The subtleties in this definition have not been explored as they are beyond the scope of this study. We are concerned with the socialization process of mainstream education and the conflicts that arise from this process. To compare "European culture" vis-a-vis the "Indian culture" is to eschew the reality of multiculturalism and global culturalization.

Reflective Research Methodologies

Reflective research conforms to some extent to the "accepted rules" of Western scholarly discourse; however, it deviates from that academic tradition which requires accredited verification or support for its assertions, neutrality and objectivity (the principle of dispassionate detachment from the object of study). In a real sense discernment is a quest that builds knowledge from reflecting and sorting out the stories, experiences and insights of others. Within mainstream education reflective research is referred to in several ways: action research planner, socially critical action research, reflective research, and action research for professional development, to mention a few. The intent is to elicit emotions and feelings from the narrator and the reader (listener). It is hoped that once read, the reader (listener) will have experienced the need to reflect and will reflect on his/her life and work.

Reflective research is a practitioner's based research methodology that involves what "you think about and [the]reflecting on your work"(McNiff, 1997, p. 7) and your perceptions. This is contrary to empirical research which inquires into the lives of other people. Reflective research inquires into one's own life as a self-reflected practice and is an open-ended process (like native reflection) with no fixed hypothesis; it starts with an idea that evolves and is evaluated throughout its development. It is a way to think about things one believes in and it enables one to develop a comprehensive understanding of the questions being asked. The methodology identifies the issues, the ways of addressing them, implementing possible solutions, evaluates the solutions, and changes the practice based on the evaluation. In this regard it does not appear to be any different from other methodologies. However, "values into practice" are an important aspect of reflective research, and as a self-reflective practitioner, the need to be aware of the values that drive one's life and work is necessary to clarify what is being done and why it is being done. This approach requires that practitioners spend time clarifying for themselves the kinds of values and commitments they hold as a person. The self-critical, continual evaluation, and the making of the inquiry public, create an awareness and accountability that justifies the endeavour, conclusions,

and reasons, for action to change for the better, personally and socially (McNiff, 1997, pp. 5-11; Tripp, 1990, p. 158). The underlying assumptions of reflective research include the need for justice and a democratic practice that recognize care and respect for the individual and for a disciplined inquiry. This is based on specific principles including: the right of all people to speak and to be heard; the right of each individual to show how and why extra attention is paid to one's learning in order to actualize through one's work and life; and "the deep need to experience truth and beauty in one's personal and professional lives"(McNiff, 1997, p. 5). It is founded on the belief that "people build on previous learning, developing and transforming past practice, into new contexts" (p. 11).

Most research practitioners who use this approach see the practice of reflective research as non-linear, accepting that people are unpredictable and that events do not necessarily follow sequential causal patterns. Graphically depicted, reflective research is viewed as a "series of cycles" or an "expanding spiral of cycles that cascades upwards" and as an open-ended system having the potential to be transformed (McNiff, 1997, p. 13). The research question is predicated on not only thinking about the question and its implication, but on thinking about one's own life and work. These are questions that are not necessarily asked as part of other research methodologies, which are founded on long intellectual traditions. This divergence allows one an opportunity to cognitively break out of traditional models of thought which we have been socialized to accept as a natural order.

While I believe many of the assumptions and aspirations of this methodology are parallel to Indigenous thought, and should be kept in mind by non-Indigenous educators as a means of closing the communication gap; it was rejected for this study because it was seen as capturing only one aspect of reflection (self-reflection), for example, who you are and how you related to the studied environment. Because it does not address how you relate to the ambient environment or Creation as a whole, it "pigeon holes" an aspect of wholistic life. It was also deemed intrusive,

for if the researcher introduced those reflections into the discussion with the participants of the study this would violate the ethic of non-interference (to be discussed later).

Ethnography

Mainstream "educational systems instill in all of us ways of interpreting experience" (Spradley, 1979, pp. 10-11). Tacit assumptions about the world are inherent in the theories of every academic disciple and in all of the social sciences (p. 11). We may then conclude that all theories developed in Western behavioural science are based on tacit premises of Western Culture, usually the middle-class version most typical of professionals. "Ethnography seeks to document the existence of alternative realities and describe these realities in their own terms" (p. 11). Spradley (1979) further suggests that "it can provide a corrective for theories that arise in Western social science" (p. 11). Ethnography is the task of describing a culture and, in this particular case, the work of describing an aspect of culture – teaching and learning. The essential core of this activity aims to understand another way of learning from the Indigenous point of view. Rather than studying people, ethnography means learning from people (Ellen, 1984; Holstein & Gubrium, 1994). Culture refers to the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behaviour.

One fragment of ethnography is "symbolic interactionism" which seeks to explain human behaviour in terms of meanings. The first supposition is that humans act toward situations on the basis of the meanings that the situations have for them. The second, is that the meaning of such situations is derived from or, arises out of, the social interaction that one has with others. The third, is that meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person dealing with the situations encountered (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). As people move from one cultural situation to another in modern societies, they are exposed to and employ different cultural rules. Ethnography offers a way to understand the complex features of modern life by illustrating the range of cultural differences and how people with diverse perspectives interact. It yields

empirical data about the lives of people in specific situations. It allows us to see alternative realities and modify our cultural-bound ideas of human behaviour. Essentially, ethnography is typically a descriptive narrative and interpretation of one's understanding of a culture other than one's own, either from an emic or etic perspective. What is problematic with this approach is that the researcher still has to filter the interpretation through his or her own cultural boundedness. I believe that I was not in either the emic or etic position because I was "partly in and partly out" of each culture depending on the situation and therefore could not separate myself as the researcher from the research.

While these methodological approaches seem to fit as analytical tools, they appeared artificial, sterile, mechanical, unattached to the inherent relations between researcher and subject, and primarily a function of the mind rather than a holistic experience. They left me with the thought that I was superimposing an artificial structural framework from one culture on to another when, I am really trying to bridge the gap. Indigenous reality is not only grasped in the form of multiple tangible and intangible mental constructions, formed from social-interaction, the environment and individual experiences, collectively and cross-culturally (Grossberg, 1994; Gadamer, 1985; Esland, 1975; McIntyre & Woodruff, 1975); it is also grasped from feelings. I needed an approach which not only gave voice to the Indigenous participants, but which also was holistic in nature as befitting Indigenous "ways of knowing." Therefore, I not only needed a methodology that met the prescribed tenets of research, but also one that conjured up images, that permitted visualization (whole brain) and was based on shared experiences. Words were not enough.

Chapter 3

A Research Design Story

Storytelling

As I struggled with the research design dilemma I met Allison Cox, a storyteller who uses storytelling as a therapeutic tool in her work within the health systems of both Canada and the United States. She believes that:

> "Story crosses over all boundaries for it speaks the language of the heart"
> (A. Cox, personal communication, September 1, 1997).

As we talked, though I don't remember everything she said, a memory of a dream I had a few nights earlier played out in my mind:

> *I was sitting in this darkened place looking into a pit of heated rocks. In my nakedness, I was gazing at the beauty of these red-hot stones, their glowing red embers surrounded by the darkness of the pit. It was a quiet place. The air was warm and filled with the scent of sage. I heard a voice. It was a very old voice that crackled as it spoke. I couldn't see who it was. It said, "You know our ways." "We learn from stories and from dreams." "Our stories and dreams are our way."*

It not only gave me the direction that I needed to go forward with this project, but it also reminded me that "we come to know" in intangible (mysterious) ways. Some people might argue that it was simply a coincidence and rationally explain the experience away, as my mind strung together two unrelated events as I struggled with this project. Yet, I know, from ceremony and experience, as do many other Native people, that there are things that happen which cannot be explained by the rationality of science. These occurrences are accepted without attempts at rationalization, they are part of being human.

From experiences as a storyteller and story listener, Allison describes listening as: letting go of defenses and relaxing into the known, safe environment of story where a shift in consciousness takes place. The listeners are offered a chance to measure their own experience in the light of the told story. Story lends narrative structure to events that might otherwise seem

random and meaningless. Storytelling is a profound medium through which change can be enacted by changing the way one views one's personal history. The storytelling experience invites people to draw upon their memories and allows them to add new information to the old memories when listeners view their life in the context of a story. Storytelling, as a survival mechanism, is seen as a healing tool, that allows us to face the challenges confronting our society, such as racism, sexism, violence, and drugs, and as a vehicle for the mind to make sense of the world (Field notes, September 1, 1997). These sentiments are also held by Bruchac (1997), an Abenaki Native storyteller, who says that "stories have the power to heal, ...telling their own stories help them understand who they are and, also, who they might become" (p. 63, p.73).

The tradition of storytelling is ageless and known to most cultures as an experience vital to the health of individuals and the community. It has been used for centuries as a means of transmitting important cultural, sociological and moral content from one generation to the next. Stories, in Indigenous thought, have been described as metaphorical, mythical, folklore and legends from the heart and soul of the Native people of North America, despite the attempts of many generations of White society to negatively stereotype Indian history and culture (Erdoes & Ortiz, 1984, p. xii; Hamell, 1987). Native thought accepts that:

> Mysterious but real power dwells in nature – in mountains, rivers, rocks, even pebbles. White people may consider them inanimate objects, but to the Indian, they are enmeshed in the web of the universe, pulsating with life and potent with medicine. Some have been told for thousands of years, and they are still being told and retold, reshaped and refitted to meet their audience's changing needs, even created anew out of a contemporary man's or woman's vision" (Erdoes & Ortiz, 1987, p. xi).

Stories are the symbols of living that give concrete form to sets of beliefs and traditions that link Native people's lives today to their past and provide direction for the future (Sarris, 1993, pp. 1-13). They are ways of knowing that defy the laws of some aspects of Western science. Rather than being self-contained units, these stories are often incomplete episodes in a

progression that goes back deep into one's life and tribal traditions. They are symbols of living that give concrete form to a set of beliefs and traditions that link people's lives today to their past and to their ancestors from centuries and millennia past (Jung, 1964). They are more than simple stories; they are a way of making sense of one's world and are the metaphorical, mythical, folklore and legends of tomorrow. If one were to take any one of the stories presented in this paper and change the language to the Native tongue and use Native metaphors they would take on the same qualities and content of what has been termed myths, folklore and legends. For example, if one of the stories were changed using metaphors and renamed. The struggle with finding balance was expressed in terms of the "Trickster" and the animals that expressed particular aspects of the story, then it may be told as a family story or tribal story that teaches survival and overcoming. It is the medium of language that superposes conventions of plot, speed and beginnings and endings. These are lived stories and reflections of life that defy convention. As Erodes and Ortiz (1984) warn for those who are used to "the patterns of European fairy tales and folktales, Indian legends often seem chaotic, inconsistent, or incomplete. Plots seem to travel at their own speed, defying convention and at times doing away completely with recognizable beginnings and endings" (p. xii). Trying to apply conventional (Western) logic is not only impossible but unnecessary. A single image or episode may be the salient feature of the whole reason for telling the story; stories are often told in chains, one word, character, or idea bringing to mind a related one, prompting another storyteller to offer a contribution (p. xi).

The common themes that bind these stories together are a concern with fundamental issues about the world in which humans live. Stories are told for children and adults alike, as elements in solemn ceremonies and as spontaneous creations or reflections to preserve an ethic behaviour. It is within this cultural context that a distinction must be made between Western storytelling and Indigenous storytelling. Some Indigenous people(s) tell their stories without a beginning or ending, and see their story as an open-ended process that includes the past, present and future because there is no concept of time, and a process of becoming. Therefore, when we

apply narrative concepts and interviewing techniques we need to be cognizant of the cultural context of the story being told. Is the storyteller answering a series of questions that are designed to meet what the storyteller thinks the listener wants to hear? Or, is the storyteller speaking the language of the heart!

Narrative Inquiry

As Spradley (1979) asserts, we are all "culture bound" and the Western educational system infuses all of us with ways of interpreting experience. Tacit assumptions about the world find their way into the theories of every academic discipline – literary criticism, physical science, history, and all the social sciences (pp. 10-11). Therefore, if the goal is "to grasp the Native's point of view, his relation to life, to realize his vision of his world" (Malinowski,1922, p. 25), then I needed to develop a methodology that drew on a number of perspectives and which provided a sense of wholeness to the themes that were being studied. Since Native thought draws on a number of perspectives - from children to elders and mainstream research - when dealing with a significant question (C. Pompana, personal communication, October 5, 1998), I needed a methodology which did this.

The methodology I chose was "Qualitative research [which] has a long and distinguished history in the human disciplines" (Denzin & Lincoln,1994, p. 1). In the 1920s and 1930s, it was rooted in sociology and anthropology and is now employed in other social science disciplines, including education, social work, communications, psychology, history, theology, philosophy, organizational studies and medical science (Denzin & Lincolin, 1994, p. 1; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). As such, qualitative research is considered a "field of inquiry in its own right. It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matter" and "uses a number of approaches" within this paradigm (Denzin & Lincolin,1994, p. 1). With a focus of experience and quality of life themes in this study, it situates narrative inquiry within the paradigm of qualitative research. Since the language and criteria for conducting a narrative inquiry are under development in the research

community, each inquirer must search for and defend the criteria that best apply to their study (Connelly & Clandinin,1990, p. 7). This study crosses cultural boundaries and cultural ethics, and protocols form an important part of the undertaking.

Conducting research in Native communities requires suppression of one's ego. Learning to listen and non-interference are essential to acquire stories from the heart. It is also a lesson in humility in that, if one cares about people, one has to serve their interests rather than some institutional dogmas by superimposing Western cultural models or force fitting these models to explain Indigenous phenomenon. The constructing of reality from an Indigenous perspective, as I understand it, is grasped from being connected to the past, looking inward in the present, for direction in the future. We are all culture bound; educational systems, models and theories condition the way we interpret experience. Therefore, if I were to grasp the Native point of view, I would need to use a method consistent with Native learning and that minimized Western cultural penetration.

The storytellers in this study were primarily urban residents who not only spoke English but had acquired behavioural patterns that were rooted in rediscovering Native culture. I needed to be conscious of the healing journeys that we were all travelling. A good example of Stonequist theory expressed from a Native perspective is found in the following passage:

> The troubles my siblings and I have suffered can only truly be understood in a cultural context, not just as a series of traumatic life events but as a deep spiritual estrangement from the complex of Sto:lo beliefs. As Sto:lo, we believe that our ancestors continue to play a role in our daily lives. In our society, when you are ill or feeling discomfort, you are described as being "Indian sick," which means that spiritual forces are at work in your life. In order to understand these forces, you must return to spiritual teachers. The elders believe the voices and spirits that non-native medical experts might diagnose as a profound mental illness are in fact an expression of the cultural estrangement so many of us suffered. (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 44)

Stories not only provide a mechanism of survival and healing but may "trigger" memories of pain that I was not qualified to address. Anyone who does research in Native communities, whether they are located in urban centers or not, needs to research the setting and become aware of the social psychological complexities of the community through contact with the Elders. One also needs to learn the "dos and don'ts". Since I did not want to put any storyteller "on the spot," I provided the question I was going to ask several days before the interview was conducted. Each storyteller was given the option of having an Elder present to address any unexpected painful responses. The question was open-ended and the story told essentially uninterrupted, with the exception of one interview when a clarification question was asked. As one Native researcher discovered, "My mother's recall is best when she is allowed to speak uninterruptedly on whatever topic comes to mind. She becomes flustered when I question her, so I find it best to ask just one question and let her reminisce without my stopping her to check the information" (Sterling, 1992, p. 166). When wanting to ask a question following this process, to ensure that the storyteller's thought is not disrupted the researcher must send a non-verbal message that some clarification is required and then wait until the storyteller asks the question. By asking an open-ended question rather than a series of direct questions, the researcher need not be concerned with whether the storyteller is answering the questions in the way that the storyteller thinks the research wants to hear it – "Coyote Stories"! Uninterrupted stories based on an open-ended question should be sufficiently broad enough that, in the totality of the story, any subsequent question should be addressed. In those instances in which one's question has not been answered, either the question may not have been appropriate - the researcher had a preconceived idea of what the answer to the question should be - or the question was just a starting point for the inquiry. I thought about changing my own question but decided not to because I had preconceived ideas as to what I thought the answer should be based on my formal education. As I conducted the interviews, I discovered the depth of the question: by the themes of shaming, overcoming the shaming and the extent of mainstream penetration into Native culture. There was really nothing wrong with the

question; I just had this naïve and pompous idea of what the answer should be and how to solve it, another artifact of higher education. The question was really just a starting point for a broader understanding of the themes of Native people(s) experiencing inequality in main stream society – a "thick description and interpretation" (Geertz, 1973; Denzin, 1989) - and as a study this was really just a pilot study. By "thick interpretation" Denzin (1989) means, in part, connecting individual stories to larger public issues and to the programs that serve as the linkage between individual troubles and public concern (p. 430).

Non-interference

The ethic of non-interference as used here is drawn from my Native ethics; is intended to allow storytellers to tell their story without interruption of or interference with their thought pattern, and to avoid the listener from attempting to shape the story. I try to live this ethic myself and, as such, it is a fundamental principle of this research design. Any form of interruption by the researcher during the telling of the story was considered to be another form of cultural penetration and interference. There was only one open-ended questions asked. The question was posed and the storyteller was permitted to tell his/her complete story without interruption by the listener. A more detailed discussion of non-interference is presented in Chapter 5.

The Multiple "Is" In Narrative Inquiry

As a research design narrative inquiry challenges many of the "scientific rules" of research relating to neutralism, interviewing, generalizability, reliability, validity and truth. "Narrative inquiry is increasingly used in studies of educational experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). In other words the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2; Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) define, in non-Indigenous terms, the phenomenon as the stories and the inquiries as the narrative where the narrative is a way of characterizing the phenomenon of human

experience and its study (p. 2). The central understanding of the task for narrative researchers is that they are living their stories in an "ongoing experiential text" and "telling their stories in words" as they search and come to know and explain themselves to others (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 4). Webster's II (1984) defines research as; a search, the researcher is engaged in a search (p. 999). Search is defined as to examine or look over carefully in order to discover something, to come to know (p. 1052). It is this understanding that illuminates the multiple "Is" complexity of narrative research where all the storytellers are participants, reflectors, researchers, teachers, learners and recorders (either orally or written) in their search for knowledge. There is no separation of the "Is" for anyone participating, each person becomes the "I" from his/her perspective and the interaction of telling and listening creates a living story. Any attempt to characterize separate and individual roles for these multiple "Is" is an artificial construct of an institutional narrative that minimizes the whole body experience and compartmentalizes understanding. The researchers are at any time the story recorders, as they record the information mentally and physically. They are the story listeners as they hear the story and conjure up images of the story and their story: the scribers as they write the story and relive theses stories and tell their own stories in their mind as tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge or as prepositional narrative characterization. They are also one with all the participants as they come to know. Greg Sarris (1993) makes somewhat the same point when he discusses dialogue as an essential characteristic of novels that comprise a multitude of voices (p. 4). Given the nature of this shared experience, "the occasion" (p. 5) of interaction and a relived episode of one's own story (the interpersonal interaction), the researcher cannot be neutral. As a reader, listener or storyteller "intermingling internal voices hold dialogue with the intermingling voices" of the story (p. 5). The intermingling of internal voices from the Native perspective also include the voices of the grandfathers and grandmothers that connect the shared experiences of the past, the present and the future. The visualizing and visioning of the Native way of knowing.

Shared Experience

As researchers we need to acknowledge how much mainstream education has socialized and acculturated how we interpret the world. We need to seriously question whether any researcher can interpret field studies unless they are part of the study themselves. Researchers need to be reflective, accountable for their conclusions, for their notions of truth and knowledge, and for the political and historical consequences of their work (Sarris, 1993, p. 6). "For cross-cultural communication to be open and effective, interlocutors must be aware of their boundaries, both personal and cultural, so that they might know the limits of and possibilities for understanding one another in the exchange. That is, in understanding another person and culture you must simultaneously understand yourself" (p. 6). Shared experiences, in a historical sense, are vital to some understanding of the question being asked. One can never totally understand someone else's experience, we don't live in their body with their history, we can at best approximate that shared experience and be empathetic as we construct our shared reality. When dealing with human beings the researcher cannot realistically separate oneself from the their history or the study. Unless the researcher is totally without feelings, defining the subject as an object of study is impossible and should not be considered. When I speak of a shared experience in this study, I am speaking about an experience in which there is a "sense of estrangement and malaise" from a complex of cultural beliefs, an inner isolation related to one's social and spiritual life (Stonequist, 1937, pp. 159-160; Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 44).

Inner View

If we want to know how people understand their world and their life, we need to communicate with them. In an interview, the researcher listens to what people themselves tell about their lived experiences (van Manen, 1997), hears them express their views and opinions in their own words, and learns about their views on their education situation and family life, their dreams and hopes. The qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the

subjects' points of view and to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences. Kvale (1996) defined this "as an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena"(pp. 5-6). He argues that a qualitative research interview is a construction site for knowledge. "An interview is literally an *inner view*, an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest"(Kvale, 1996, p. 14).

It is at this point that the methodology of this study departs somewhat from the notion of qualitative research interviewing as expressed by Kvale. Rather, it is constructing knowledge from an Indigenous inner view of a lived experience. It does not consist of an inter-change of views during the interview process, nor is there an attempt to interpret the participant's story because the stories speak for themselves. In a sense it is a quest that builds knowledge on the stories, experience and insights of others and in this particular case, it is an introspective reflection of storied experiences about learning in public school settings. The research question is an attempt to understand themes of the lived world from the storyteller's own perspective about learning and barriers to learning. It is conducted according to an inner view expressed within a cultural context and protocol that focuses on certain themes. The storyteller chooses the content of his/her description to the question which takes the form of a story, a narrative of the storyteller's educational experience. The purpose is to investigate the subject's experience of prescribed learning, and the researcher's questions are aimed at a cognitive characterization of the storyteller's story of learning. The storytelling seeks qualitative knowledge expressed in normal language, it is not aimed at quantification. The research attempts to obtain nuanced descriptions of different aspects of the storytellers' lived experiences. Descriptions of specific situations are elicited, rather than being general opinions. The research is seen as non-linear, accepting that people are unpredictable and that events do not necessarily follow sequential causal patterns (McNiff, 1997, pp. 11-13). The researcher must have openness to new and unexpected interpretations rather than having a fixed hypothesis of what the question means to the storyteller.

The process may produce new insights and awareness, the subject may, in the course of the inner view, come to change his or her descriptions and meanings about a theme (Kvale, 1996, pp. 30-31). The knowledge obtained is produced through the interpersonal interaction from the inner view.

In this particular research design, like Sarris (1993), I attempt to explore a specific kind of dialogue or conversation that stands apart from conventional interviewing that provokes the "intermingling of multiple voices within and between people and the texts they encounter"(p. 5). The stories should evoke self-critical, continual evaluation, and make the inquiry public, creating an awareness and accountability that justifies the endeavour, conclusions, and reasons for the approach (McNiff,1997, pp.5-11; Sarris, 1993, p. 6; Tripp,1990, p. 158).

Naturalistic Generalizability, Reliability, and Validity

A question often posed in interview studies is whether the results are generalizable. Generalization is not necessarily an aim of narrative research, it was not the intent in this study. However, in everyday life we generalize more or less spontaneously. Kvale (1996) makes the point that "From our experience with one situation or person we anticipate new instances, we form expectations of what will happen in other similar situations or with similar persons" (pp. 231-232). Kvale (1996) terms this tendency as naturalistic generalization, which rests on personal experience. It develops as a function of experience and derives from a tacit knowledge of how things are which leads to expectations rather than formal predictions and " ... may become verbalized, thus passing from tacit knowledge to explicit prepositional knowledge" (p. 233).

Kavle (1996) argues that "[r]eliability pertains to the consistency of the research findings and is raised concerning interviewing, transcribing, and analyzing. Questions of interviewer reliability has been primarily directed at leading questions, when they are not a deliberate part of an interviewing technique, they may inadvertently influence the answers" (p. 235). In this study,

with the use of the ethic of non-interference I have attempted to avoid the difficulties associated with reliability. The stories were tape-recorded, transcribed verbatim from the recordings and returned to the storyteller for verification. Contrary to Kvale's assertion of interpreting the meaning of what was said as well as how it was said, this study subscribed to the belief that the researcher cannot successfully interpret someone else's experience by analyzing their story, but can do so only through a shared experience. The researcher may interpret the shared experience and may have its reliability scrutinized through discussions with the storyteller.

For Kvale (1996), validity involves issues of truth and knowledge (pp. 238-239). Modernist understanding of truth and validity are founded on the belief of an objective world. In "Positivist" philosophy, knowledge is a reflection of reality. There is an independent external world and objective reality where there is ideally a one-to-one correspondence between elements in the real world and our knowledge of that world. This research project adopts a "post-modern" perspective in that the conception of knowledge as a mirror of reality is replaced by a conception of knowledge as a social construction of reality. Valid knowledge is constituted through a dialogue of conflicting interpretations and action possibilities are discussed and negotiated among the members of a community (pp. 238-239). In accepting knowledge as narrative, in open-ended interviews people tell stories: narratives about their lives. There is a shift from modern formalized knowledge systems to the narrative knowledge embodied in storytelling (Lyotard, 1984). I agree with Kvale (1996) who suggests that " a skepticism about global systems of thought, a renarrativization of culture takes place, with truth to be worked out locally in small narrative units and with the collective stories contributing to uphold the values of the community" (p. 43).

Truth and Perspective

Generating multiple perspectives rather than absolute truth makes more sense to me. Truth means reasonably accurate and believable data rather than data that are true in an absolute

sense (Patton, 1990, p. 483). It is not only how one experiences the world but also how one describes things they experience through their senses (Patton, 1990, p. 69). From a phenomenological perspective there is no separate or objective reality, there is only what one knows one's experience is and means to them – one's truth.

Data Gathering Procedure:

There were seven inner views conducted but unfortunately only five appear in this study. Institutional deadlines and cost prohibited, at this time, the inclusion of two stories. The transcripts were completed but had not been verified by the storytellers and could not be included in time to meet the deadline for submission of the thesis before the costs escalate. This cultural value of research in general, deadlines imposed and mainstream values of cost efficiency, can impede and contaminate the quality of the research by bringing the project to a premature conclusion. (I wondered about how many research projects have been terminated or brought to an untimely and incomplete conclusion but later still used for social engineering and what damage they may have caused.)

Participant Selection

Participants for this study were selected by notifying a number of students at a graduate gathering at the University and notifying an Elder of what I wanted to investigate. Those who were willing to participate and could be scheduled within the timelines provided was included. Of the seven participants, I knew two very well, two I had previously met and the others I did not know at all. Participants were asked to volunteer to tell their story of their educational experience. In keeping with the methodology discussed earlier, they were permitted to tell their story through whatever medium they chose, from individual interviews, song, written stories to art. Only participants over the age of twenty-five were interviewed because I believed that they have more life experiences and more cultural exposure. The purpose of having separate interview

sessions was to provide for specific male and female perceptions of their formal learning experience. Individual interviews were conducted in accordance with the participants' preference of location and in the presence of an Elder if requested. The participants authorized tape recordings of individual interviews. The transcripts were provided to the participants to clarify and verify their story and they were advised that the tape recordings were available to them if they so desired. Participants were instructed that they could change their story any way they wished. Only one participant chose to partially edit her story. All others did not edit their story nor authorize it to be edited. Storytellers could withdraw from any part of the process at any time and any information that had been recorded would be returned to the storyteller. The storytellers would be able to return to the process at anytime that they wished to without any inquiry as to why they left the process or wished to return. The anonymity of the individuals who participated was maintained through a coding system that identified each individual only to the researcher for follow-up clarification of his/her story. Participants were also requested to complete a consent form and provide some demographic information.

The participants were informed that once the project was completed, any information pertaining to them would either be returned to them or destroyed on their request. If the information was to be destroyed, the individual had the option of being there when this occurred. No information concerning specific individuals, locations or persons or places was shared with anyone else without the express approval of the participant. The descriptive narrative was drawn from a compilation of all the stories without reference to their specific individual source, location or persons or places mentioned in the story and supported/or not supported by documentation from the public domain.

Storytelling is a fundamental aspect of Aboriginal learning, It provides a safe risk-free way of relating or speaking about life experience. It provides individuals with the opportunity to tell as much of their story as they feel comfortable and expresses not only their view of the world but also how they feel about it. Having the stories told in the storytellers' location and in the

presence of an Elder provides a comfort level that is consistent with the individual and Aboriginal community's norms reduces anxiety and fear. By conforming the community's norms and research protocol, the ethic of non-interference, the right to be heard and participate, and respect for what was said, were maintained throughout by asking one question: Tell me the story of your schooling experience. One other open-ended question was asked to clarify a particular meaning of a phrase used by the storyteller and the question appears in the transcript. The University standards for the protection of human research participants were thoroughly and rigorously followed throughout this study

Chapter 4

The Inner View Stories

Transcript

The discipline and rigor of qualitative analysis depend on presenting solid descriptive data, what is often called "thick description" (Geertz, 1973), in such a way that others reading the results can understand and draw their own interpretations. All participants chose to tell their stories in the English language and the stories were transcribed to provide a "thick description". In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meaning of interacting individuals are heard (Denzin, 1989, p. 83). The whole stories of the individual participants were included in the body of the text to capture participants' voice, feelings, and description of their experience.

I tried to capture the Multiple I's in the narrative by indenting the storyteller's voice. In what follows, when I am not the listener but the storyteller, I use *italics* to identify my voice and when I am the recorder/researcher I use standard text. I include [pauses, ums, ehs, sighs, sniffles, laughter, colloquiums, pace of speech and accents] to convey the feelings the storytellers were projecting, and to preserve their individual voices in the written text. What is important is not the use of proper English but how the stories were told, the feelings and expression of their remembered experiences.

In many ways it was a humbling experience. As the researcher I wanted to put aside my taught educational status, my credentials, and hear the wisdom of these stories. I wanted to look beyond the perfection of language and accept the words as spoken and hear the message behind them and not judge the message based on an "expected form" of presentation as validation. It is not whether the words are pronounced correctly or are spoken with an accent or seem to revolve in chaos, it is the message that is important. I wanted to respect the Native principle of time and everything being done in its own time. Withdrawal from pre-conditioned ideas, respect for deliberation and observation, and the that multiple perceptions take time that cannot be regulated

by the tick of the clock. I wanted to honour the heart-felt sharing and openness and a desire to share experiences without guilt or shame or judgmental fear that exist in some other cultures. The first draft of this study was reviewed with each participant to seek their approval of the way in which the information was presented and used. All participants agreed with the way the stories were presented and only one participant decided to remove some of the accent language, added additional information and left the original content in tact.

The Third Generation Story

Deanna (pseudonym) is a Cree/Sioux woman, 49 years old who has a Bachelor of Education degree. I met with her in her office, at about 11 a.m. where she provides educational counseling services for Indigenous people(s). Her office was laid out much the same as any other office, with the exception of colourful posters of Native events, feathers, sweetgrass, and books. There was a homey lived in feeling about the office. We greeted each other, I offered rat root, which she accepted in our mutual understanding that she was about to give me something and I wanted to reciprocate. She knew why I came and provided the following written profile: "My Cree name is Mountain Woman (Asiniwaciaw Iskwew) and my Sioux name Shunka Wakan Skawin. I am a fluent Cree speaker and writer and a proud descendant of Poundmaker. My grandmother was a good medicine woman who taught her gifts to my father and one of his brothers. I am on the healing path and exploring all the different parts of my historical ethnic background. I have four grown children and seven grandchildren."

We smudged in her way, the air was filled with the sweet smell of sweetgrass and as I watched her smudge I remembered and reflected on the day we went and picked sweetgrass.

> *It was a day of ritual and bonding as brothers and sisters. It was hard work in the broiling sun and yet the day had a serenity about it, the feel of the grass, the smell of clean air and the ice cold water we drank from an underground spring, took me to another place. A place of tranquility. There was hardly a word spoken, it was about Mother Earth and our connection to it. It was about learning and feeling that connection, not*

just picking sweetgrass. It was about discovering that there are more important things than punching clocks, competing for status, and gathering wealth. It was about living and living things and relationships and sharing an experience.

As these thoughts were swirling around in my mind she started her story:

Um.. I went to boarding school when I was seven and a half years old. I was picked up by Indian Affairs and taken to ..um.. boarding school, my mother was able to come with me. And she stood at .. [sigh].. at the bottom of the stairs while .. [voice breaks].. I was taken kicking and screaming into the .. [pause].. up the stairs into the building. I knew dat she was leaving me..uh. I bit the principal, ..uh..on the hand, .. [sniffle].. I guess dat was .. um ..[sniffle].. dat's one thing, I've always been .. always been kind of proud of dat at least I fought all the way to ..um.. to this place. [sniffle] um.. After that I had nightmares most of my..[sniffle].. um.. life ..um.. as soon as I ..um.. as far back as I can remember from dat boarding school experience I had nightmares all the time. [spoken very rapidly with virtually no pause between words]. [deep breath and sigh] But I also use to have..uh..uh.. a dream of a white horse all the time and I, I use to dream of snakes crawling all over .. [sniffle].. all over me and then ..um .. but these were two different dreams, they weren't in the same dream. [spoken very softly][deep breath and sigh] But then I'd have nightmares and then I'd ..um..I started shutting down after about six months in the .. [spoken very softly].. in the boarding school and I stayed shut down most of my adult life right through my whole life I guess. Shut down my feelings, shut down everything and ..um.. we were told not to speak our language, not ..[long pause] ..um.. [sigh].. that anything ..[deep breath].. that had to do with being Native was a handicap and dat was something dat had to be overcome ..[pause].. the more you ..re..repressed it the more you changed ..uh.. to being non-Native, the more you were ..uh.. ..uh.. a success, you were deemed a success ..[spoken softly] .. there was a lot of .. [long pause]..[spoken very softly].. physical violence associated with this..um.. from the nuns and to..[long pause]..[cough]..to.. ..uh.. to re-enforce these rules.

I read a lot, it was my way of ..uh.. dat was my way of escaping ..[sigh].. my life was to read a lot and I still do, dat was one good thing I guess dat came of this life. And then for about six months…two months out of the whole year I went back to my my ..uh.. reserve at home and I was still able to maintain my language right through ..uh.. ..[pause].. right

through ..uh.. ..um.. it seemed dat the more you, they ..[pause].. fight I mean not fight but the more you oppress native people the more the ..[long pause].. I guess, its passive resistance to change or to assimilation, you just keep on keep ..uh.. hanging on to these things dat you have had because these things are life, you understand dat they are life, even as a child I remember asking questions that ..[sniffle].. and I was told these were life for us, for native people and dat this was something ..uh.. in the school experience something dat had to be ..[pause].. Dat had to be ..uh..uh.. endured or dat had to happen because it was law for us to go to school we didn't realize everybody has a choice of where to go to school, we just figured dat this was something and this was .. I was the third generation to go to boarding school. My grandfather was in boarding school, my mother was in boarding school, and I was in boarding school and when you're in boarding school you have no experience of being a parent so there is no, no dat's three generation of no ..uh.. ..[pause].. of trial and error..of parenting by trial and error ..um.. so I, I ..uh.. passed on a lot of the ..uh.. dysfunctionality I learn by living in two worlds and two langu ..[deep breath].. because its ..uh.. I passed on a lot of ..a lot of what I learned to my kids. Umm.. one of them was ..and there's no, no experience with parenting and there is also no experience with being with ..uh.. in a social environment with the opposite ..uh.. sex, we were segregated and any, any kind of ..um ..[pause] .. any kind of ..um.. um.. communication between the two was forbidden. So there was no experience at all to start ..uh.. ..uh.. to relate to a man and then when I went home my parents were separated so there was no experience there either. In relating to a man ..[sniffle].. so that when I did have that freedom I didn't know how to handle dat either and then ..[deep breathe].. and I did grow-up in a violent home.

Uh.. when I was small I remember running off to the bushes with my grandmother ..uh.. because they were ..uh.. people drinking at my house … at my house and my brothers and sisters would pass ..uh.. [pause] .. would pass ..uh.. bedding out the window and we would make a bed in the bushes ..[sigh]..uh.. and take my ..our grandmom out there and come in for food when we had to ..[softly spoken]..[sniffle].. and moving again, and because there was no experience, I, I saw ..uh.. ..uh.. ..um.. I, I ended up in a relationship that wasn't healthy for me and I was ..uh.. addicted to those kinds of relationships for a long time in my life until I began my healing process. My kids have also been .. uh.. have had that learned behaviour of addictive relationships ..[sigh].. [spoken very softly] .. and they, they've started their healing process too now since I've ..[pause].. started. And they

didn't realize dat the relationship dat they were being ..uh.. getting into ..uh.. were the same types. They hated that in me until I, I changed, and then they started changing too.

So school was very ..uh.. regimental ..uh.. it was a shameful experience because you were taught never to be in ..uh.. dat your culture was ..uh.. was worth shit, your language was forbidden, your ..um.. your ..um.. spiritual experience was ..[deep breath].. was evil. Dat the only way to .. in order.. for salvation was to .. and dat salvation was for an after life you don't know exists and you were taught as a little girl that ..um.. dat experience, dat ..um.. experience you have with a creator is an evil thing and the only way to change .. to save yourself, was to reject all dat you were ... at home everything dat you loved you had to reject. [sigh] And dat included .. uh.. furr.. because you couldn't deaferentiate between the ..um.. philosophy and ..uh ..[pause].. and the person, at lot of times dat meant ..ta.. rejecting the person that taught you dat philosophy that was shameful of course. So ... I and you couldn't change that love you felt for those, those people who taught you your Native background at home and then you were taught at school that you have to reject that, dat is evil because you were going to burn in hell forever and ..[pause].. and at that time there was a big, big ..uh.. ..uh.. ..uh.. mass hysteria about attack from Russia ..[smile and jovial voice].. and they use to scare the kids at school like you could die at any time, like the the planes could come at night ..uh.. and ..uh.. wipe you out, right now! And if you don't straighten up and start thinking like you, you could burn in hell forever, tomorrow, like starting tomorrow if ..uh.. like so there was kindda of choose now! Today! Or ..ah.. be lost forever it could be tomorrow, it could be right .. like the apocalypse could come tomorrow and you have to do your ..uh.. make your choice right now! And you have to do the penance for .. you also have to do penance for the way you use to live .. you live ..ah.. when you are eight years old like telling you things like that was so awful. Um ..And these were Catholic ..um.. nuns that were telling us, Catholic teachers, Catholic priests. There was some people, ..[pause][sniffle].. there was girls that disappeared ..uh.. ..um.. during the day, to like to the priest's room ..[sniffle].. and the nuns, like they would go through the nuns, they asked the nuns to send these two girls and the nuns would send them off. We didn't know like ..um.. we thought they were being rewarded for something. I don't know what happened ..ah.. ..[long pause].. [the voice was very subdued].. they would come .. they got a lot of extra ..um.. ..[long pause].. privileges and extra ..uh.. trips ..uh.. extra ..uh.. candy and stuff ..[long pause].. and they, they never

shared what their experience was they just hung around in a clique together and they were the ones that got all ..[sniffle].. the ..um.. ..[long pause].. good stuff.

But my ..um.. there was so much teaching that I missed out of .. with my grandmother. My grandmother was a medicine person, we went .. when I was small I use to go on herb, herb ..uh.. rides with her, when on a wagon with my grandpa sometimes we would go to the sandhills, sometimes we would go to the swamp, sometimes we would go to the forest but it was always for digging up roots, for picking .. um.. medicines and dat and dat really ..[sigh].. I associate, ..[voice breaks].. I associated that with evil so I never learnt what I was suppose to learn. That was my legacy, I was suppose to learn dat, as the oldest person. There was ..uh.. in my family, my, my, ..[pause].. and there was a white horse that use to come to me in my dreams, and there was a white horse my grandma use to keep on the south wall all the time, a beaded horse that had been in our family for generations ..[sigh].. because I rejected that ..um.. teaching she gave that horse to someone else for safe keeping, she said, someone will come and get one day. [sigh] And I forgot about that white horse in my dreams until about ..um.. a couple of years ago and now I have been exploring that dream since then. [deep breath] But I didn't even remember about that white horse or the dream until I started learning about ..um.. the.. the horses in, that are represented, that represent the directions in the Native ..uh.. ..uh.. worldview and white horse is from the south, the one that nurtures, the one that keeps you safe ..uh.. So I guess that horse was there for me to ..uh.. at a time when my life was in chaos, [sigh] my life has been in chaos, most of life, I learnt to repress my feelings ..[softly spoken][a deep breath].. when I became an adult I chose an abusive relations, I married into it, I ..uh.. left eventually, but I, I was still drowning my sorrows, my my feelings, stuffing my feelings through smoking, drinking, and then one day I ..uh.. I, I was paralyzed, I went into the hospital paralyzed ..[pause].. my family came into the hospital and told me what are you doing laying down. What are you doing laying there! My cousin told me, he says You come home and heal. I said Wayne, [not the researcher] How! and he said, I send ..uh.. my brother to come and get you tomorrow, he said, You come home and heal. So the next day his brother come and got me. I was ..um.. I had been.. the doctors didn't know what had happened to me. My family doctor was horrified. So when da.. my cousin came and picked me up and ..uh.. ..[pause].. to me to the reserve were they had ..uh.. Elders and my relatives. I have .. I am lucky to have so many relatives ..[sigh].. my relatives were there waiting for me and everything was

prepared for the sweat lodge ..[spoken softly].. and everyone prayed for me in the sweat lodge there was an Elder da helped me there, ..[sniffle].. and I had to get .. uh.. I had to go in to the sweat.. with the .. on my elbows I couldn't .. I was paralyzed from the waist down. I was suppose to go to four sweats, I healed .. I started healing after the first sweat by the third sweat I was walking already ..[pause].. and I started ..uh.. a teaching job up north and ..uh.. ..[long pause].. I started walking, ..[pause].. my first step was ..uh.. everyone was invited I was in ..uh.. for supper and I was invit ..uh.. I started to take my first step ..[deep breath].. ..[sniffle]..so my cousin had a big lunch ..uh.. big supper for me and invited all my relatives and I walked in there on two.. took my first three steps into the room and I, I fell into a chair. Everybody was clapping for me like crazy, like they do for babies when they take their first step ..[laugh].. From then I started walking, like I was falling into closets and stuff because I couldn't control where I was going at first and then ..[sniffle].. I had a garden, I'd run down stairs and wherever fell in the garden I would plant something and that's where I'd stay until I came back in, then I'd ..um.. After I started walking I returned to my life of chaos and then I lived that life for a couple of years and then when I did go in to my fourth sweat then the spiritual healing came in. So that was a bonus. Everyone was praying for my physical healing and then the spiritual healing was .. ah.. the bonus and ..[deep breath].. I've been on that journey for quite a while now. I had ..uh ..[long pause].. my children are so happy with the change that they have started their healing process too and they have made a conscious effort to stop the cycles in their generation. I guess I started ..um.. ..[pause].. recognizing them in mine and because ..[sniffle].. I remembered when my mom tried to quit drinking. [pause] She ..uh.. couldn't understand why ..uh.. she wanted to quit drinking so bad and she couldn't, she didn't understand the cycles and how enmeshment works. Like she would work on one but there were so many things involved in her life, she thought it was just a matter of quitting! [long pause] I was lucky I had a lot of teachers in my life. I have been talking about my experience, with like education for ..[sniffle].. I guess from .. although I did go to school I went to boarding school and then I, I .. went to boarding school until grade nine and then when .. I came out I went to a regular school system ..[sniffle].. I couldn't handle the freedom of being in the ..ah.. charge of my own life. I had been institutionalized right to grade nine so ..[sniffle].. when I went to grade ten in a in a regular school in ..ah.. North Battleford ..uh.. within a year I was living with a guy. I didn't know how to.. I didn't have that relationship ..[sigh].. ..[deep breath].. how to handle a relationship so it just went really fast right away, so I ended up ..ah.. marrying

tha.. a man and having kids and then .. it was a violent relationship and he wouldn't let me return to school. So I ended up working ..[sniffle].. and then I went ..ta.. we separated, I left him then I went to ..ta.. univer .. in went back to ..[sniffle].. University. [very softly spoken] I, I at one point I had, I had gotten my ..[sniffle].. I went to night school while I was working and gotten my classes through night school and then I did ..uh.. then I went to University. I was still living that life of chaos I had ..um.. there were so many kids there! There were ..um.. six thousand I think natives registered at that ..uh.. the University so there was always, if you wanted to be in that life there was ..uh.. so many kids in town that you could just make your rounds all day. [spoken softly] So I ..um.. I did manage to get a scholarship one year ..[pause].. that, I was lucky there was a ..um.. there was a focus, they had a Native, a Native education program where they taught a lot of Native ..uh.. Native stuff. Native focus, Native in ..ah.. curriculum teaching you to focus on the different teaching .. learning styles and teaching styles of Native people and da how to recognize that and how it it … teaching you that Native … that kids fail because they their not .. the teacher and the student are not connected they're .. uh.. have different teaching styles, they have different learning styles, so if they're not connected den the child is not going to learn. It's also a matter of understanding what is relevant to the child's well-being so ..uh.. in order to understand what is important to them in their world, in their worldview you have focus on that and use that as ..uh.. use their knowledge base as a teaching tool. Rather than teaching them what you think .. or the majority of, of society. Listen to them you just teach them what they, they want to know, teach them what they have to know, like in order to be functional, like the core subject areas but use their interests and your worldview as their interest and what they consider to be relevant. Use those as tools, as teaching tools to enlarge their knowledge base.

Um .. living in two worlds I guess I thought everybody had to do that because my parents and my ..uh.. grandparents they thought, like they were so ..uh.. acquiescent about me being taken away from them and they .. it was so hard on both of us on all of us like, it was hard on me, and I was third generation so that they had been through the experience, ..[deep breath].. my grandparents, my mom and then myself, so this was a way of life that was excepted. So they … it was something that had to be ..uh.. ..uh.. that you had to live with, .. [sigh].. so you go to school you learn one thing and, and it .. School work was easy for me because I read so much I guess. My mother read a lot and we learned to read, in my family there are about ..uh.. ten, ten kids out of those ten kids there are about seven

of us that are avid readers we trade books by the boxes ..ah.. even the ones that didn't go to .. uh.. University. But ..uh.. so you keep going back, back and forth between the two worlds and some how the, the … you get the feeling that what you learned from the Native stuff you learned from my grandparents and the Elders …[deep breathe]… that is something you have to hide, but you need it for life, but you have to hide it because its ..uh.. ..[spoken very softly].. no one wants to see in da White society, nobody wants to hear about it ..[sniffle].. and yet you understand that it is life giving for you but you hide it so there is a shame base there that was built into us for a long ..uh.. from the time were small, but you also understand that you needed the education in order to get a job. In order to get out of that poverty you were living in because .. [voice fades away] .. because … talking to that ..uh.. lady from the violent centre yesterday about our childhood's … We use to live right by the highway, I said. There was a whole bunch of us kids running around and people, even from the reserve use to drive by like, they would crane their necks from one direction over to here where they could look into the window and right down to the ..uh.. until they could look into our house more because we didn't have any curtains, I told her. We were a side show in our reserve and nobody … none of the kids were allow to come and play with us in our, at our house because we were … there was so much alcoholism in our family that they ..um.. kids were not safe to come to our house I guess. She was telling me, that's the same as us but at least we had curtains, she said. We had plastic curtains that use to … mom kept cutting them, they kept getting shorter until they can't get any shorter, then you get a new pair [laughter]. But ..ah.. so we were ashamed based ..uh.. in the educational system but we were still treated like that by our own community and ..[sniffle].. out of all of us like all ten of us there is ..uh.. ..uh.. two that are .. [sniffle].. practicing alcoholics right now, the rest have a trade they have always had a trade because we couldn't ..uh.. go anywhere but up! We had to hang in there to get out of that poverty we had to get our education, get a degree, get a job and all my brother and sisters … my mom died very young, she was only forty, forty-two when she died and our … some of my brothers and sisters were still young and my grandmother took over the kids again. We all understood that we had to ..uh.. we couldn't depend on her, she was old, she was sixty already in her late sixties when she started looking after the kids and ..um.. she would never live forever. She couldn't live forever so we had ..[spoken very softly].. so we had to learn to be ..uh.. independent, we had to learn to … and we always taught to be independent anyway because of the drinking situation we started changing roles from an young age. So we learned to adapt, we were resilient ..uh..

because we were survivors from being in an alcoholic home, being in a boarding school situation we became survivors ..[deep breath].. the very thing that closes you up ..uh.. ..uh.. ..uh.. spiritually, and ..uh.. and ..uh.. heart wise that is the very thing that helps you survive in the, in the education system to ..uh.. help you achieve.

When I was ..um.. dragged up those stairs ..um.. in boarding school, I was thinking about boarding school, dragged up those stairs I didn't know a word of English. I have ..um.. so right from day one in the classroom I learned to translate my thoughts from Cree to English and then process my thoughts. So that was ..ah.. something I had to do in order to learn, in order to because I didn't want to … there was one girl in the class that couldn't do it she was in that, in that ..um.. ..um.. kindergarten class for four years before she could learn the language and I didn't want to be stuck in there for four years so I learned how to do it right fast and then I kept it up right through. But most of the time especially when you start hitting ..um.. ..um.. high school, they didn't have junior high, but when you start hitting high school you can just … there's total confusion. Why am I learning this, like you have no use for what they are teaching you, like why would I use, why, why would people have to know, like ..um.. how many people one king went to bed with, like in another country, and dates there were so many wars that were fought and you had to know the dates. Like 1500, 1600 this war was fought, that war was fought ..[deep breath].. then I remember sitting one time in history class they were talking about ..um.. Mesopotamia, and I had such a hard time with that word, I had no concept of where it would be ..like geography, modern geography I had an idea of what that was, but ..uh.. ancient places for me like that ..and I had to know that in order to pass grade nine. I had no idea of where in the world it would have been anyway .. if I had known the … anyway why would have to know about that, it didn't make sense. And I just couldn't understand about Pharaohs, what does that have to do with me [laughter] where they lived and what they did, but I still struggled I still knew that I had to know that in order to pass. I was only doing that, you know, because I knew I need my education in order to have a job. So you adapt, you keep adapting! And you keep adapting! You keep adapting, I thought there was no other way, like ..[sniffle].. ..um.. you don't question, boarding school, when you are brought up in an institution you don't question the way things are suppose to be and then I had to take dramatization in ..um.. grade nine. I had to sit there for an hour and pretend I was a cap in a box, I couldn't understand why, you know, why does that have to be like, a cap in a box for me has no experie… I have no .. like.. that is not in my ..um..

world. That's one example of how they could use ..um.. child experience, and that was way off in left field, I don't … and there was only one girl that got off that, why put thirty-five girls through that, just one girl connected and that was in grade 9. And ..um.. like today there is, there is some ..um.. some ..non ..um.. non-Native teachers in .. uh.. reserve schools, ..[sniffle].. but at least they're there, they, they can understand what the ..[pause].. worldview ..uh.. little bit and they ..ah.. attend the cultural events they understand the powwow, the drum, singing what it means .. how important it is to Native people and they understand how .. uh.. important it is for them to connect it is not as ..uh.. it is not as ..oh.. can see off the reserve, but in the reserve schools you can see the non-Native teachers really struggling to ..uh.. to ..uh.. understand that the kids ..ah.. and I think that if you have a lot of extra curricular activities in that, in that deal with the importance of ceremony and dance for Native people .. uh.. the teachers will be able to understand the spirituality that permeates our whole ..uh.. the whole life style of Native people from one end to another. And how everything is interact.. interrelated and then ..the teaching comes easy, once you understand that then the teaching comes easy ..da.. ..like.. ..uh.. if you have no contact with your students then you don't care ..like.. you just teach them the way you were taught. You push your curriculum! That's all that is important is that curriculum is delivered by the end of the year, that contract is fulfilled that's it!

I went to, I went to school in a boarding school, my husband .. I was in a boarding school my husband was in a day school on the reserve. The boarding schools were run by Catholic school system and the day schools run by an Anglican churches the difference was that the boarding schools taught the child to reject their ..uh.. Native ..uh.. ..um.. ..[pause].. detribalize, that was the word it was, that was used in policies was to teach a child to reject their culture. The day schools taught the parents, involved their parents in the school system and taught them to ..um.. teach their children to reject.. so they taught the adults to reject their chil.. ..uh.. ..[sniffle].. choose Christianity reject their culture ..[sniffle].. and teach the child so that there was ..ah.. focus on the child in ..da .. boarding school system and the focus was on the parents in the day school system. I ended up with my husband who was in the day school system and I was in the boarding school system. My husband ..[pause].. use to laugh at me, use to make fun of my grandma. My grandma was a healer, she was a herbalist and ..uh.. my husband use to make fun of my grandma, he use to call her the witch ..[sniffle].. and we had many fights over that because I won't

..um.. I won't let him ..uh.. putdown my grandmother like that. I won't let him make fun of her and sometimes they would escalate to a physical level, where we were slugging it out, but .. He was so totally ..uh.. convinced that being White was ..ah.. was ..ah.. better than being a Indian, in fact he use to make fun of the Indian culture. [sniffle] To this day my ..uh.. he, he started teaching my grandchildren that sweetgrass was ..um.. was, was, evil that it was something you don't practice, he won't let them go to powwows when they were …until I talked to my daughter, I says "You cannot ever separate your culture from your ..um.. who you are no matter who tells you" and now grandchildren are taught that, just because an adult tells you something doesn't mean that it is always right and now my grandchildren just love powwow music. And but.. he was just so totally, totally ..uh.. ..uh.. ..[spoken quietly].. been brainwashed, his mom was brainwashed and he was brainwashed, the day schools were so much ..uh.. effective in carrying out that detribalization. Um.. because there was more abuse I guess in ..ah.. in .. ah.. boarding school system so there was more passive resistance and, and if you're doing it in the community level and going right into the community it was more effective. Passive resistance is even though you're not overtly resisting anything you're just ..uh.. just, just acting .. uh.. it looks like you're accepting this policy, you will never accept it in your heart. That's just like in the ..um.. same way with the ..um.. ..um.. .. [pause].. lot of these policies by Indian Affairs that were aimed towards ..uh.. ..uh.. ..[sniffle].. making you ..uh.. assimilate! All these … because we, we .. when your born Indian you're born political I think. You're a political animal because that's the way of life for you ..uh.. resistance is a way of life and if its passive you save your energy for the big fights ..nu.. ..la.. . But you hang on to what you have even if you .. they think.. or you act as if you're accepting.

I sat there for some time after the inner view, just trying to internalize all that I had heard. I thought about my own story and my experience in the orphanage where my language had been beaten out of me and my shutting down after numerous beatings:

> *I remember I was about three or four years old and I was talking to another boy. I can still feel the hand grabbing my left shoulder and pulling me around and feel the smack across my face. That burning sensation on my cheek! I remember looking up from the ground and seeing Sister Michael Joseph standing over me, with her left hand on her hip and pointing her finger at me, shouting "Your deserved that!" I never really understood why I deserved that. She used to always say that to*

me! Was it because I had a paler complexion than the other kids and spoke a language that I wasn't supposed to speak? The other boy helped me up and told me, "You can't talk like that or you'll get hit again." "Don't you cry!" Even to this day if anyone grabs my shoulder from behind, I turn around ready to fight. I think about how it was so engrained in me that I never rough housed with my children when they were growing up because I couldn't control the urge to strikeout and protect myself – it became an automatic reflex. It's only now that I realize how much of that playful bonding between father and sons we never had.

I thought about Stonequist's (1937) assertion that "individuals may have to readjust their lives along several points: the language in which they communicate, religious beliefs, and the moral code followed" (pp. 216-217) and this was the starting point for me in that process of socialization and assimilation. The extent to which this conservative European ideology permeated the orphanage was expressed in obedience, original sin and of being seen and not heard.

We were told (it seemed) every morning at prayers that we were born with a sin because our "real" parents did not obey God. They ate an apple they were told not to, which was why there was sickness in the world and we had to suffer to make us pure again. We had to suffer for our parents' sinful ways.

When Deanna talked about being paralyzed and beginning to walk again it brought back memories of pain and punishment for me:

It seemed whenever we asked questions that challenged the nuns' authority, we were told, "To be quiet, to be seen and not heard!" Another expression Sister Michael Joseph used was "Ask me no questions and I'll tell you no lies and then there won't be any good byes." Good-byes usually meant some form of punishment like kneeling on an unpadded wooden pray kneeler with your knees positioned halfway down your kneecaps on the sharp edge until your whole lower body ached. When you tried to stand after this punishment, you could hardly walk straight. Even after I was adopted and taken to church I would never sit down, I would always stay on the kneeler and I can still remember everything going black, breaking out in a cold sweat and refusing to sit down because it was a sin to do that. When the Catholic Church changed their ritual and kneeling wasn't as prominent I always felt strange when we didn't kneel when we were supposed to. As I grew older and dealt with these inner conflicts I gradually moved away from the Catholic Church. I started to understand my dual nature and began

breaking away from that conditioning that shutdown my feelings and my right to question.

I thought about the shaming. We were shamed a lot!

You weren't supposed to get out of bed even if you had to go to the bathroom. If you had an accident then you were made to lie in it all night then in the morning you took all your wet bedding to the laundry. This was after everyone in the dormitory was brought to your bed space and encouraged to laugh at the person that had the accident and being called a sissy or baby. Most of the kids didn't like doing it but if they didn't they would be punished. This backfired on the nuns because one morning we caught Sister Hieasine trying to hide her wet bedding and sneak down to the laundry. At first we were shocked and then we started to laugh at her. Sister Michael Joseph became very angry and slapped a couple of the kids. We were all told that we would have to say extra prayers and apologize to Sister Hieasine. We never really caught her again but we knew that she was getting up before us because Sister Michael Joseph used to wake us up with her bell instead of Sister Hieasine.

I thought about the time when I was made to sit on a stool at the front of the class, wearing a dunce cap on my head because I couldn't write my alphabet letters between the lines of my workbook. The nun would stand at the front of the classroom with a wooden pointer and point to whatever was written on the chalkboard. We would either repeat over and over again what she pointed at or we would copy it down in a work book. I recall when we were learning to print the alphabet we had to copy the letter off the board into the work book and the nun would walk around checking to see if you had copied it correctly. If it wasn't copied correctly, or inscribed between the lines, you were scolded and told to repeat it and that she would be back to check it. If it was still wrong, when the nun came back to check it, you were hit with the pointer on the end of your fingers and told to do it correctly. The nun never helped you by changing your fingers or hand position or showed you how to inscribe the letter in stages. You got it right or you stayed in the class over recess while the other children were allowed to go outside or some other form of punishment was metered out. My fingers were usually pretty sore most of the time. They were usually so sore that I couldn't hold the pencil properly and subsequently was not able to scribe the letters between the lines. The failure to accomplish this task under these conditions was the punishment of sitting at the front of the class as a dummy. This wasn't because I couldn't do the work, I couldn't hold the pencil properly because of the pain and cramping of my fingers. Like Deanna who escaped into the world of books, I escaped into the world of drawing. I spent every minute I could drawing pictures on paper that I had torn out of the workbook. When I got caught I was punished and had the drawing ripped up directly in front

> *of my face and in view of everyone else. I did find a way to print letters so that they conformed to what was wanted. I used to hold my pencil between my index fingers so that my finger tips never touched the pencil or the paper and then inscribe the characters because I never wanted to be hit like that again.*

I thought about this shaming that had been inflicted upon me and many other children in institutions of the dominant culture! It is not that the shaming occurred because I was in an institution but it was institutionalized shaming as advocated by European educators. I recognize that the institutional shaming has occurred throughout the history of education and is not limited only to native residential schools. Bull (1991), Chrisjohn and Young (1994), and many others have demonstrated that it was an integral part of what Deanna called the detribalization of Indigenous people(s). During the period of residential schooling whole generations were "quarantined from both Native and colonial societies" (Carney, 1982: 2). It was not only in residential schools, but foster homes and orphanages (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 215) that the "saving" and "changing" of Native peoples was seen as "the Indian must become non-Indian in order to achieve self-sufficiency or to become self-supportive" (Carney, 1988, p. 307; Chrisjohn & Young, 1994).

There is overwhelming evidence that many children in institutional settings suffered abuses. Chrisjohn and Young cite this passage from a brief given in 1994 to the Royal Commission by the Anglican Church:

> Canada ... must increasingly become ...a country of white men rooted and grounded in those fundamental scriptural conceptions of the individual, of society, (and) of the state... The Church felt it had a Christian responsibility to assist the Aboriginal people in this transition. Assimilation, like medicine, might be intrusive and unpleasant, might even hurt a great deal, but in the long run it was for the people's own good (p. 4).

It is generally accepted in Aboriginal communities that the events described about residential schools are accurate and that the effects of this treatment have filtered down to the

present time and continues to have an effect known as 'residential school syndrome' (C. Pompana, personal communication, July 7, 1980). Deanna's story adds testimony to this phenomenon and provides some definition to this concept. I suggest that the concept is much broader than that when one includes foster homes, orphanages and adoptions (where the children are dislocated from their family, not informed of their Aboriginal roots or their Aboriginal roots are denied (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 215) and as the dominant culture is perpetuated it creates an "institutional syndrome" which has many of the facets of the residential school syndrome, post traumatic stress disorder, and marginalization. Stonequist (1937) says, "At a minimum it consists of an inner strain and malaise, a feeling of isolation or of not quite belonging. This may be subtle and evanescent in quality – coming and going with particular experiences and shifting moods" (p. 201). For Aboriginal survivors of sexual, mental, and spiritual abuse and their families, reconnecting with their culture is a critical step on the journey to recovery. A clinical study of Aboriginal women survivors found that "the women realized they had to deal with their profound sense of cultural shame" (McEvoy 1997, p. 139), needed to transform their negative experience into "something more life-affirming if they were to heal and begin to feel whole and valuable" (McEvoy 1997, p. 139). As one Aboriginal survivor told McEvoy (1997):

> I came to understand it wasn't because of me that all these things happened, it was because this had happened to my aunt and uncle and grandfather and great-grandfather ... all the way back ... it was being collected from the point of European contact and being spilled out on the youngest generation each time (p. 139).

Doreen Sterling, a Shuswap social worker who has pioneered Aboriginal family therapy in B.C., stated that, "Some people, torn from their families as little children, literally don't know what a family is. What, really, is a father? What does he do? How should he act?" (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 151). From my own experience, Indigenous men also need to transform their negative life into a positive life force and remove themselves from the notion of the "stoic Indian."

The Marginalized Child Story

I met Mary (pseudonym) a Cree/Sioux, at her home in the late afternoon. We had never met before. I was told by one of the other participants that she had heard about the inner views and wanted to participate. We started the inner view immediately upon my arrival.

Ok I had just moved from Saskatchewan and was about six months after I moved here that I started going to school. I took UCEP and ..[pause].. I don't know how to start this? Ok I just went from Saskatchewan I was about, 21 years old, as single parent. My kids were young they were about two and four at the time. I got a place, started to go to UCEP and … it was hard going to school because I didn't really know anybody in the city and I was kind of lonesome and trying to take care of the girls, not knowing who to trust and stuff. It went on that way for a while and I was doing good in school at first and ..um.. later on I started having family coming from out of town and staying with me and ..[pause].. ..um.. I kinda started slacking off in school because a lot of drinking was going on and ..um.. ..ohh.. Now I'm just going to school and ..[long pause].. I didn't that ..none of the classes started .. seemed like ..they weren't what I wanted ..like.. why am I taking this … all this English and stuff … [pause].. I thought ..like.. I was too old to be trying to get all this stuff now. When I was at my age, where I was and … so I wasn't really interested in stuff, in school any more and ..[pause].. then the teachers started seeing ..[pause].. like .. that I was slacking off, missing a lot of school and stuff. So I started talking to them ..um.. I started getting back on track ..then.. ..um.. realizing that I did need all these subjects to go further into school and ..[long pause].. and the school part was ..[pause].. good like there's was a lot of Native people in there, but .. um.. I was born … I grew up the Christian way so that part was hard for me because everybody was ..like.. in the Indian way and stuff. But it was kind of hard at first but after a while ..like.. you know, they didn't bring up what we each believed in. Whatever they had to say I listen to them, what I had to say they listen and you know that was a good thing ..like.. because usually if there is going to be ..arguments about that then you can't get close to anybody and especially when I was the only one who didn't believe that way.

Ok I was raised by my grandmother ..like.. most of the time and ..um.. like we lived right on the reserve but we weren't part of it. She made sure we weren't part of it, we couldn't

talk to the other people on the other side of the reserve and she made it seem like we were just living on a farm or something and ..[pause].. we could never go to da the reserve schools and ..um.. we had to go to the ..um.. school that was ten miles away. It was mostly a school for farmer kids and da so she let us ride... the only reason she let us ride the bus out there is cause her son drove the bus and stuff because we had to pick up some other ..[sigh].. Native kids on the reserve and stuff. And that went on all through our life, like our grownup life and ..um.. ..like.. even in the store if we ran into somebodyum Christ we liked them because we went to school with them and she .. would get real down on us, sometimes she wouldn't even talk to us for a couple of days or she would belittle us and ta, like you know, like I can't believe you would talk to that person then she would bring up in front of everyone, all the older people and stuff and like you know it took ..my dads mother.. and but I don't know because I was always a people person and you know like I did believe in my grandma's way but I did ..um.. I don't know how to say this but ..but I believed in the Indian way too! You know. Like my grandmother's way was the Bible and stuff and then ..um.. my grandmother on my mothers side passed away …before I was .. no actually she did raise us for … she did keep us for a bit but I don't remember her I was too small. I don't know so like it was really hard like cause in ..like.. everything even in school like … yeh wanted to hang around with your own people but you couldn't you're kinda scared to go back to your grandma and stuff and the teachers knew, like they knew what …how my grandma was ah and like you know I couldn't do nothing everything I had to do was sneak around and I kinda .. I was pulled both ways like felt like jeez you know I can't even get ...[pause].. myself in like who am I anymore and stuff. …And ..[sniffle].. um.. [long pause].. then my mom would come around and she would talk about stuff like that and then later on when I was a teenager I started hanging around ..[pause].. my people who didn't believe the same way my grandmother did ..[sniffle].. and ..um.. you know it seemed like she made such a big issue out of all my whole life, like for what you knew and all these people I meet like sure they believe in what they do and I believe in what I do.. and ..um.. you know and but still even to this day I can still feel like … its still there my grandma's teaching and stuff. So anyway ..um.. ..[pause].. so ..um.. ..[pause].. when I came to this city, like a lot of the people I was meeting were Native, right away and I was thinking no I shouldn't be hanging around with them ..ah.. and I didn't but then .. there was instant friendship and stuff and I thought my grandmother's not here anyway and … So start hanging around and to this day these people are ..um.. were my best friends through school, they help me,

they didn't care like what …well they did care like, about what I thought and believe in and they listen to me ..ah.. and they never ever said anything and ..um.. they help me through school and stuff and …[pause]… I'm loosing my point …[laughter]. You know when I speak about my grandmother I just get such a rage in me sometimes you know. My mother starts getting mad at me!

When I started going to UCEP I started ..um.. like that was when I first moved here and I didn't know very many people and then I started going to the library and stuff ..ah.. I started reading up on Big Bear and like the whole works ..ah.. because my mommy use to tell me stories and I was so fascinated by all of them .. it was like, wow. And ..um.. I remember one time when I slept ..uh.. just an elementary book about Crazy, Crazy Horse and you know ever since then I've always wanted to learn, so this was my chance when I moved here I didn't know anybody, I started hanging around at the library ..ah. Oh I read for two years in the library about everything ..ah.. all the time and you know ..um.. in that way when I was going to school so I'd really …[long pause]… I don't know! It made me … kinda be who I wanted to be, like and stuff ..um.. I don't know I still believe in the same ..[spoken softly]... both ways to this day and …what's the dif… they lived their lives, right! The Native people a long time ago why is it so wrong like …[pause]… for my grandmother [nervous laugh] and stuff you know …[sniffle]… and ..um.. there was a lot of other stuff ..ah.. like sexual abuse and stuff and all this …and you know …[sigh]… and everything like this comes from my grandmothers, fighting, everything like that and ..um.. ..um...I was saying to …

I started drinking lots. Like I wasn't drinking twenty-four hours everyday. But I just couldn't quit like sometimes I'd go for another two days or … you know, this went on for a few years and stuff and that's that's what really … [softly spoken] messed me up in school a lot ..ah.. because of my partying and stuff and … it was so easy because I had people coming into town all the time and staying with me so I had an excuse to go out ..ah.. So …[long pause]…[clears her voice][spoken softly]… don't know what kind of schooling my grandmother had, she never ever talked about … and when I, I tried to ask her a question she would never say anything ... no… [long pause]… But I ..um.. I know I was even asked her about my grandfather … because men are worse than women and I guess he was a really a good man nothing like my grandmother. Everybody throughout our whole life … thought my grandmother had a shotgun …[laughter] all the time … you

know she was so mean ...though... she always had to rein the whole family, even the married ones she would ... she still has that and we don't get along, she doesn't talk to me. Cause I left home and I don't ...and she made all the women in our family grow up thinking that ... not of us need a man like! All the women in the family they all got degrees and everything ...[sigh]... like grandmas ... like you know... really good jobs and everything ..um.. and none of them are married. None of us are ...[laughter]... you know, because she trained us that way and ... so like she gave us so much wrong teachings and ... and this is totally different from what this [laughter] you're asking me about. But .. all my teachings from my grandmother did affect me my whole life ..um.. and still ..um.. some reasons left ... [hardly audible]... [sigh]...

So when I went to college because I was brought up Christian and the other people were not I was confronted with that majority because I was the only one who didn't ... um... because I ...um... you know I always try to make up for things, other ways being a ...the funny one in school, you know just so that ... you know just doing other things being around ... doing different stuff all the time, it was so that, you know ...[sniffle]... When I was with all those Native people my grandmother would come back to me and that's why I tried to stay away from them, stay on my own, spend all my time in the library when I wasn't in class, like not talking to anyone or giving my opinion or stuff because if I gave my opinion then sometimes you would have to give, you know, experience or you know, what happened. So I always kept quiet and stuff and ..um.. ..um.. but eventually, very very slowly things started we ... thrown into projects together in school and your outings you have to go to ... and very slowly things started to happening and that's where I really ... started to getting to known about [pause] the Native way and stuff and being with those people, you know and I felt like I belonged in there, so you know ...[softly spoken] ...[long pause]. Then I had a councillor there, she was Native and she really help me out too because I would talk to her about stuff like that, so its good to have a councillor in school. I explained how I felt, at first I felt like I don't belong here and stuff and felt like such a hypocrite and I'm not going to this Native classroom and being a part of this stuff when I'm not even ... when I don't believe that way, you know. [long pause] ... But I'm here to learn it...[laugh]... It was so different, it was so messed up ...um... and stuff. She help me by talking out my feelings and stuff and sometimes she make me see the light, you know, make me see clearly lot of stuff.

Right now I've been working out in the farm, its towards Edson and ..um.. pause]... like growing up with my grandmother's beliefs and my mother's and stuff and its hard out there because they're really like those Whites from way back. They're like are you Indian and stuff, you know, they're real rude to a lot of Native people and where they calls us out there to go work for them because its cheap labour for them and stuff. So ..um.. you know, it kind of a puts me, makes me feel like I do want to be White, you know and, ...[sniffle]... but when I'm around my mom like I'm proud to be, like I'm Native and stuff, when I go to Saskatchewan I'm proud to be Native, like, because ..um.. with all my family and friends and stuff. And ..um.. [voice breaks] But it's a lot in the work force though that's when I kind of feel that I wish I was White and stuff and ...[pause]... But I'm al.. always.. I'm proud to be Native you know and but you just I don't know ...[pause]... I'm just trying to find a road, like where ... like what I really believe in and stuff and ...[sniffle]... You know if I really believe in my grandmother's way why would I have doubts and stuff, you know... kno... and that's been really coming up ... this past year for me, a lot! And I just keep questioning things and then I try and put it out of my mind so that I don't have to go through all that wondering and stuff, so I don't have to answer to myself. Geez I'm going to be thirty next month and my age being thirty like I really want to know who I am and gosh my kids are ... growing up big now and I want them to know, like, ...um... sincere in what I believe in and stuff. I don't want to have all these doubts when I'm talking to them because they're going to, like, catch on, like, and stuff, so .... [spoken softly] ... I .. have .. to.. come .. to ...something about that. But .. uh.. where do I begin sort of thing. So ..... also its hard cause, like, I look like, I kind of look like, I wish I looked either Native and taken for by the Native, you know that's really hard for me too, ah and ...[sniffle]... If I look White I wish I was full blooded White, you know, sort of thing, that really bugs me, that's always bothered me since I was small, you know.

We sat there for a few moments, saying nothing, I knew intimately how she felt but could not say anything. I left her some rat root and departed. As I was driving away, I thought about her final remarks again, about wishing to know who she was and being either Native or White. It reminded me of my own situation where I look more White than Native and the frustrations I have been going through for a number of years trying to identify my parents and my

mixed heritage. Mary's story echoed my own feelings when I am confronted with beliefs from different worldviews, trying to respect their views and at the same time knowing that there is something intrinsically wrong. She provides an excellent example of Stonequist's marginal man, marginal situations and the search for balance. The duality presented by being on the cusp of two cultures presents:

> ... is one who is poised in psychological uncertainty between two (or more) social worlds; reflecting in his soul the discords and harmonies, repulsion and attractions of these worlds, one of which is often "dominant" over the other; within which membership is implicitly if not explicitly based upon birth or ancestry (race or nationality); and where exclusion removes the individual from a system of group relations (Stonequist, 1937, p. 8).

It also reminded me of Mary's confrontation with the marginal situation where groups possessing different cultures and systems of mores "triggered" her struggle to bring into harmony her loyalty to her grandmother's teachings and her mother's Native teachings. Her experience of racial prejudice, where a collective attitude towards a whole racial group impacted her personally, evoked questions of belief, identity, and the need to resolve them for her children. Again, it reminded me of my own story and my children's struggles with feelings of not "feeling right" in mainstream institutions like the Church and school. They seem to have this innate sense, a feeling they really did not quite understand as they struggle within these institutions. This led to a desire by my eldest son and the family to search out our cultural roots. As he began to discover his Native roots, he started to comprehend his inner conflict between how he was being socialized and this conflicted with his inherent ancestral knowledge. Once he began to resolve these issues through finding his roots and ceremonies, he discovered his own path and is currently completing an undergraduate degree in social work in a Native college. I was amazed at how much his story was my story, like reliving my youth, returning to school and knowing that balance comes from discovering who you are and that these stories need to be told.

The Learning to Read Story

Ruth (pseudonym) is a Saulteau/Sioux, 37 years old who has completed grade ten. I had been introduced to her some time ago, however; we really did not know each other. I met her in her office. We spent a few minutes chatting, I confirmed with her what I was doing, explained the consent form and the demographic information and she signed them. Ruth indicated that she did not speak her Native language and that she could only speak English. While she was a child her grandmother did not tell her stories because she had died when Ruth was a young girl. There was no story telling in her family. I gave her some rat root, as is the custom of giving back something for the information I was about to receive. Ruth settled in her chair and began her story.

> Ok as growing up as a child, I didn't have much education. I was born to ..ah.. a single parent mother of seven kids and we lived in a little small town in Saskatchewan . Uh.. went to school and did my 1-5 dare ..went through the system. Uh.. Up to … da stage where I didn't want to go to school because I was bigger than da others and ..um.. ..um.. from my childhood I can remember I would be in grade four but I still didn't know how to read. I could do I ..um.. my math was good but my readin and my writin were really poor. Cause I member I would ..uh.. just go to the library and look at books when everybody else was readin. And the teachers … the principal was very mean and like ..da.. so we didn't have our assignments done, we'll get into trouble and a lot of da times I was always sent to da office or sitting out in the hallway. So it got to da point where I didn't even want to go to school and coming from a small town dey didn't … at dat time they didn't even check with da partents if da childs were in school. So I'd go an check in then I'd go to da bathroom and I'd sit in da bathroom all day long and this happened … until I just stopped going to school at da age of ten cause I couldn't do the work, and then one ..we were always getting yelled at by our teacher. So ..then I played so much hooky that …I didn't even bother .. It ended up that I didn't even bother going to school and when dey notified my mother, mother was ..ah.. you'd say she was ..ah.. went through the residential school syndome and at da age of ..ah.. she couldn't hardly read or write too so she couldn't help us with our homework. [deep breath] So we couldn't go to her to get help and then we couldn't get help at da school and ..uh.. I don't know why I never went

to my older siblings but … cause they all … they were all got … they were all going good, they all got their grade 12, and I also found out da as an older ..na… adult I had a learning disability. Where ..um.. I have signs of part dyslexia and a da time … I guess my mom never knew or didn't have the knowledge to know about learning disabilities. So I … guess … I cut school ..I quit school when I was in grade 5 and 6, they couldn't make me go to school because I couldn't do the work and then I was way too big dan the other kids. So just stayed at home with my mom and as I got older I use ta buy magazines and I self taught myself how to read. I'd just read and misout words and all that time I didn't know dat I was using those context clues and I learnt myself how to read, but I still couldn't really write. So at da age of twenty-seven I went back to school and ..uh.. when I moved to Edmonton here I thought I would go back to school, but I had a really good understanding on how to do things and to organize. But it was my writin and I still do have problems with my writin still today. So I went back school and when I went back to school I went back to a Native school adult education at the time, so dey started me at a grade 3 level and then in four years … and at dat time yet when I started school I still didn't know dat I had a learning disability, till about my ..um.. four year at the school. But how I was getten through dis I needed to rewriteum and rewriteum and then I always had the dictionary ..ah.. and I knew the skills to look up words in the dictionary what I was trying to say because my knowledge of ..um.. I can .. write paragraphs and dat but I still have to punch through the dictionary for the spelling and things like dat. When I was going to school, after three years of going to school I notice that in my mind I'd have a complete thought but my writin was miss out a word here and dare, like I'd have.. then I'd, then I'd check back so when I do paper work I always check it two or three times to make sure it is complete and dat's how I was getting through my assignments and then I went to da instructor at the time and dey moved to ..um.. Jasper Place and ..uh.. ..uh.. about dat time I was starting to find out about my learning disability at the time ..da.. students at the school was trying to fight for … get the culture back because they were takin the culture from us and we tried to keep our culture. They moved the Native school I was in another school ..um.. the one instructor there was ..um.. taking out from the school because she was bringing lot of Native culture and the Board didn't like dat and then dey tried to change it there, because we were going to sweats and I think the sweats really helped me a lot in my learnin and, and like kept me in school because it was balancing off my life when I was getting stressful. And then ..uh.. when ..uh.. dey fired her then they tried to wipe it out all together, but there was a group of us

dat tried to keep it going, so at about dat time dat was happening dats when I went for testin and I found out dat I had a learning disability. When dey tested me dey asked me if I had any story telling in my family. When dey, when dey ..uh.. tested me too dey also said it was because I didn't have that learning as a child and then when I went through that testin I had .. like my .. the life skill coach teacher at the time when we had our conference told the other teachers that she's really capable of learning but the other ones, sort of, kind of ..um.. wanted to put me in a working program and dat one teacher didn't want to put me in dare because she seen what it could do and just that it take, it takes me a little longer to grasp, to grasp it. So all dee years as a child I didn't know da I had a learnin disability and I went back to school for four years and den I got … my grade 10 and I took grade 10 and was gona to be registered again in grade 11 this fall. But den I thought I'd take some time off and work for a while. But do still plan on goin back to school.

When I compare [both schools] I found dat the English teacher there [Native school] really .. helped a lot because he went right into detail of doin the English, step by step and then when I was going to the other school they missed out on a lot of things and da just gave you the book, and said here learn … and it was kind of hard to do because we .. like you know we didn't take it and ..um.. like we sort of miss out ..I was sort of missing out, I, I couldn't really grab it as a whole and I found dat when someone sits one on one with me and explained everything I caught, caught on right away. Like .. like at [one school] they kind of told us … to ..um.. write a paragraph and dey never really told us the steps or showed us how. So ..like.. when I got through dat I would have to .. I was, I was going out of the school to get help. I was tutoring and dat, I was goin on my own to get tutoring on how to do it and I, I think for me they should have more, and ..uh.. they shouldn't be so .. they .. for me I felt like dey were just grabbing the fundings and not really caring if the students were getting their education and like dey were setting up for me, I felt for me dey were setting students up for failure. Like, by setting them up for failure, by saying you would do .. dey told me a few times to take this program you'd do good in there and then after my funding was all used up it was like, oh we can't help you any more. Like dey'd shut and close the door ..uh.. and den I found the same thing at [the other school] that they were doing dat to students cause a lot of the students dat were goin through that program didn't ...um… I think I would have quit school if I didn't have a lot of moral support to push me to keep going because they did that to me a few times dey put me in

this …program dat they said would help me and I found dat it didn't help me and then after dey turned around and told me that dey couldn't help me anymore, but I just kept .. I kept ..[sigh].. trying to go. I found that it was like ..um.. it was more or less .. like with my learnin disability I had to be.. shown like .. to have extra more help and it was more a fast pace program for students what were really fast pace but still dey were accepting people with learnin disabilities and putin them in da thing and not really offering the support and the help that dey need. That needed it there, so I think if I didn't seek outside help, I won't have got as far as I got. I didn't go back there last semester, last year.

I, I needed to see, hear and … see, hear and then write it down at the same time and ..um.. a lot of da materials wasn't ..up.. like .. you couldn't .. like .. lot of their materials weren't taped and you couldn't getdum, getdum taped .. because you had to hear, see … They usually just gave, like, books and talked to the whole classroom, you know, and ..um.. like just say you have to do page dis and dis and dis and not really explain it and then … So, me, I found it was more geared to fast learners and they really didn't think of the ones that … then there was a lot of students in the class that found it … didn't like the way dey were being taught because dey didn't think getting their moneys worth for going to school and there was … a lot of dem were angry. Angry because dey felt the way the school … dey were being taught in school was ..um.. they weren't getting their moneys worth what they were paying dem to ..goin to school, like paying for the school and it could have been taught, like better, with more detail. It was helpful sum, but some thought dey could, it can do, it can do, like better because when ..uh.. like, when ..if we did, I .. say example I did a report or I wrote a poem and it was coming from my heart and the English teacher started putting high, really high, high linguist.. in there and I told him no, I'm not changing my poem because this is … these words are coming from my heart and a lot of the people in the class said this poem was good and me and her got into, like .. got into .. cause I told her and she ..uh.. she ..uh.. gave me a low mark for that and I tried to take it up higher and then .. don't know .. she made some kind excuse but dey talked to her because I said these are my thoughts and my feelings and you can't change someone else's thoughts and feelings. With that book report she would do dat. But den I guess it varies with from ..um.. instructors too because there was some good instructors and some, and some were .. for me felt like she was at burnout stage or she did … a good instructor was someone who dat took the time to sit down and didn't get ..uh.. angry if you were to ask questions to her and then I found I didn't ..I didn't have dat when I went .. I

transferred to [that other school]. Like, like instructors were dat take the time to explain something to you it was more like a hassle, ok I have to go down to the next class, I don't have time, you got to book an appointment and sometimes you wouldn't get appointments four til three weeks down da road and then the assignment would be due all ready .. so. So .. a lot ..like.. we didn't have, if I didn't have the outside tutoring I don't think I would have made it this far or if I didn't go outside of [the school] to get my help dat I needed dat I wouldn't have gottin my grade 10. There was a few good teachers who would ..um.. stay, like .. help you and not just brush you off or book a time to help you, like soon before the assignments were gone. The classes were a mixture of Native, Native and ..uh.. I found dat ..[pause].. I, kinda found da it was discriminat..ation too with some of da teachers when I was back in school ..um.. I found dat this one teacher really triggered .. she was very mean and .. uh .. she sort of … she reminded me of one of my old teachers when I was a child and she .. uh .. would sort of ..uh.. putdown people in class in front of ..uh.. and some of .. the other students and I didn't like that and I went and I complained about her. She would ..uh.. in away like ..uh.. how could I say dat ..um.. she would really ask if .. no dat's not the right answer or .. oh I think.. It's hard to give an example .. the ones dat she knew who were really timid and wouldn't speak up for themselves, she will always pick on them and if they couldn't speak up for themselves she'll would of kinda yell at dem in the class but she seemed to know … the ones to pick on, but she knew not to … the ones .. not to, you know the ones dat would speak up to her. But there were a few Native girls in my classroom dat didn't hardly speak up and she really … like I don't know … really .. got them embarrassed … in class and that one girl was going to quit ..and she cried dat one time and .. but I kept encouraging her to go to school and .. So we all got together and complained about this teacher …. so. [spoken softly] I found dat when I going to [the Native school] we'd always go to da sweats .. about .. like once a week, and I found like .. it help me to find .. I think dat it was a big part of it too.. that to help me learn was .. I didn't know my culture background when I went to school and then when I started at [the Native school] and I was there for four years dey taught us about our culture and ..uh.. when I found .. I started to find my culture my self-identity and learning came .. a lot .. lot easier and when we were in da third year ..uh.. da school .. it got switched to .. it moved to [another non-native school] and they were trying to take away the culture but we all fought for it but I felt that it helped me to balance out my life and to find out who I was and … Like we would to sweats and ..uh.. do cultural things like beading and things da .. da, dey said long ago da way of life we use to live and ..uh..

like we'd learn about people, deyd had ..uh.. people comin in from South Dakota and deyd would do ceremony with the students and .. I found it pretty good.

If I could change things now I'd find dat ..um.. I ..uh .. I'd would like to have a school for our own Aboriginal children where dey would be taught dey culture .. cause I find even my daughter .. with ..uh.. .. she .. where she's goin to school now dey have hardly .. no .. no culture things in dat school .. dey don't .. or dey .. I think dey they have a liasion worker comin in once or twice a mont and I ..uh.. found dat .... I would get a school where .. and get our Aboriginal kids to be taught in the Aboriginal way, with their culture because I find with the culture that it will help dem .. to learn better. In a way that ..um.. dey will learn better by finding out who dey are cause, I find dey a lot of the kids and I da helps my daughter to know who she is and where she comes from and to be proud of herself helps her to learn better and helps to build up her self-esteem ..yeh.. and then I .. and then .. in order for her to learn she has to be happy and has to be proud of who she is and where she comes from. She really likes school ..she .. she really likes school a lot .. but I found with her too cause she has a learnin disability that ..um.. uh .. uh.. da there's not much resources in the public schools for her and .. like again I, I'm reaching .. taking her to tutoring and I do a lot of the work with her and I tape a lot her stuff for her and I .. uh.. push her to read a lot and I find within dat school she was like startin to just fall through da system. Just before I left school again I'd been doing my test verbally and I, and I was getting like really good marks and I ..uh.. tried to get da done for my daughter cause when I study with my daughter verbally she can say everythin she learnt da day or what where the provinces are and she shows dem on the map but when it comes to writin she cannot. Then dats were she just passes with a fifty or sixty and then when I go back to her and ask her to tell me verbally and I went to her school and dey said dey don't have the time to do dat ... to pull her aside to do verbally testin with her ..and .. [sigh] .. so I found dat really disappointin cause I really had to push to get her tested too because dey won't test her for the longest time. Where she has someone dats supporting her where I as a child didn't have that .. so ... But my two older girls are doin good, but again like I have to get outside extra help for dem, for two of dem. And a lot of da ... things I learned I self taught myself when I wasn't in school .. I self taught myself, like I was readin .. for some of the instructors dey thought .. dey thought just I wasn't trying because my readin level was really higher than my writin levels so dey, dey would tell me dat I wasn't trying

.. and I was trying and dey didn't believe dat cause I could read that .. that I couldn't write. Now they're sayin the same thin about my daughter ..um.. dat she not trying.

As she told me her story I thought about my eldest son being tested and the school stating that his intelligence rate was within top percentile in the world – the school officials told me that "He wasn't trying!" He does not have a learning disability, he learns more effectively through auditory teaching techniques. Yet the school continued to try to force him into the prescribed mould of teaching which resulted in his dropping out. I also thought about how Ruth felt the pain of the girl who was embarrassed by the teacher and how the teacher's behaviour "triggered" particular feelings and memories of sadder times in her own life.

It brought to mind an experience of my own shaming:

> *I was in primary school of mixed ethnicity (Irish, French, and Italian) and during the next class I was to read a chapter out of a French reader to the class. I was excited about doing it because I had been adopted into an Irish-French family and knew I could get a lot of help at home to prepare me for the task. I studied for several days with the help of my family and could almost say the chapter without reading it. As I stood in front of the class and started to read I was interrupted by the teacher and told that I had not pronounced the word correctly. Throughout the whole reading this continued until I finally finished. Each time I was interrupted the reading became progressively worse. I felt like closing the book and returning to my desk but deep within me I wouldn't let her win. I was so embarrassed by the experience I never opened the French reader again and found ways to avoid having to read aloud..*

When I think about it now, I think of how a learning opportunity was stolen from me. To this day whenever I have to stand in front of an audience and speak from written script it "triggers" memories and feelings of this experience. I have developed strategies to deal with these feelings whenever I am in a similar situation. The more I considered this experience and my previous experiences of shaming in the orphanage I realized that I was not embarrassed but rather I was being shamed again in another Institution! I could embarrass myself by saying something

inappropriate or by being unprepared. However, I was prepared and the teacher's abuse of authority was shaming me.

The Heinz 57 Story

Suzanne (pseudonym) characterizes herself as a Heinz 57 of Montagnais-Cree-French descent. She is 47 years old, speaks with a heavy French accent and is working towards completing her Ph.D. We met at her home and exchanged rat root and sage. The inner view was reviewed and edited by Suzanne. It appears as edited by the storyteller with only some of the accent represented and with pauses and ums that have been provided to accentuate the spoken nuances of the story.

> In my family it was important to learn to read and write ..[pause].. basically ..um.. because my family did not have that chance so most people at home are illiterate. Um ... my grandmotder I lived the first few years of my life with my grandparents. My grandmotder could function but she never read anything for pleasure or for … relaxation or anything like that. She kept her accounts, her rag money and she kept uh um very simple things that she could write. Um.. My grandfather was the one who liked the books. And I remember dat ..uh.. he would try to read every day something. He was a great storyteller ..uh.. and when he read he went to a different space. He was lost to the rest of the world and my grandmotder … really, really ..um.. resented that. She felt very shut out. But I was fascinated. At first I could sit on his lap and look at whatever he was reading and get these horrible books at times well I think they were horrible now but they were quite fascinating then ..um.. He had a couple of old books with pictures of the devil and things like that and ..[laugh].. we, they used to scare me but at the same time it was like, it was interesting and I wanted to know, know more and ..um.. the closest I came at that time was catalogues but as I grew up my grandfather used to say ..um.. He would read to me things that were way too advanced for a child but he would say; "Try to see the pictures in your head. Try to see the pictures because if you can see them with your eyes, you can recreate them. You can see them." And that's how I got my interest in books. And my motder tried to teach me, when I went to live with my motder then I was about uh getting on tree years old, a little bit older than that and I would go back to my grandparents until I was about four and a half.

Uh, ..um.. My mother was trying to teach me the little bit she knew, the alphabet, the numbers, putting simple words together and already I was like uh a kid who loved books like if I could get my hand on a book it didn't matter if it was an adult, a grown up book or a child's book I would read, actually I was kind of bored with a child's book because it was too simple and I started school knowing how to read and write and I was quite proud of that. Um.. My grade one ..um.. when I went to the school with the nuns, I remember that I already knew more than what grade one required so I spent most of the year being a teacher's assistant in one way where I would help the other kids with forming their letters and, and I took quite a, I, I was pleased that I could do that but the following year, in grade two that's when I caught up to the level of my knowledge and uh it was really hard to deal with because I felt that um I felt very, um it was hard to go back to the role of being just a student, just a learner, a basic learner and suddenly the things that I knew I knew were not validated and the things I didn't know were emphasized. So uh it was a difficult year also emotionally in my family. My aunt had died, ..uh.. my two cousins had died, ..uh...

Um.. certain things about ..um (pause).. social skills, um because discipline was so uniform um certain types of other knowledge that was not necessarily in the book. Um.. I had lived on farms all my life um I followed my grandpa around when I was a little kid when my grandma didn't want me around in her way. I, I was sent to my grandpa and then so I would shuffle back and forth but I, my socialization had been with adults. It had not been with children so the first year in school because I was still like doing certain things that the other kids were not doing I didn't feel it as badly. But the second year I was, I was like just a kid among the other kids. And that's when I was so ..um.. educated I started becoming aware of certain things um as to how um I became treated differently. That's also when I uh became aware that ..um.. the ..um.. [long pause] maybe because the first year I was not like, I never competed to be first in class but if I look back at these records of school that … has, ..um.. my marks were over 90 so I never felt the need to compete you know like it was like; "I'm here, I'm, I'm lonely, I'm, I know certain things and I can help other people learn." The second year was very different. The marks were still good, if I look at them today, but they were not the 90's. So now I had to struggle, and the struggle also mean competition with other people being aware of that because of my mother, it was very important for my mother that you be at the top and that meant that you had to be better than the others. And I never had that streak at that kind of

competition. It was like the time my little friend was first, I'm really happy for her and I remember coming home and telling my mom; "Guess who's first?? You know. "So and so is first?" And my mom getting so angry and saying; "Why isn't it you? What's wrong with you?" And so, I, I lost this kind of uh interest in telling my mother what was happening in school because that was not meeting her criteria. So there is a break there.

Grade 2, I remember because that's the only school picture I have until grade 10. A kid with large eyes stares back at me. That you! I worried about my classmate going to tell as she wasn't a Catholic. The Protestant kids were not separated from us until grade 4. I was really worried over her going to hell. I took it to my grandpa, he said, "God made man and man made religion ..." It has always stayed with me that, gave and gives me great comfort to know that. It has helped me find a spirituality outside of the Church. There I was always afraid, ashamed, sinful. In Native spirituality I have "come home" to myself, found acceptance, safety, and peace. I am related, connected and I have healed as a result.

Also, grade 2 I was kept out of the birthday celebration for Monsieur Le Cure (parish priest). I had practiced the song and dance with my classmates, had been fitted for a crepe paper daffodil dress, and because of my small size I was right in front. I was so excited about this whole event, the dress, and the performance. I knew my mom would be proud (even if she could not attend). On the day of the celebration I was kept at home on some pretext. I was so disappointed ... Years later (as an adult) I found out that my mom had received a call from the school (Mother Superior) telling her to keep me home because it was not fitting for a bastard child to be showing off in front of Monsieur le Cure. I never performed until grade 9. The best I did, was to be in the church choir as everyone had to take Latin songs and music, I loved that. In grade 10 (High School) I joined the choir. We performed a few times in school concerts aimed at showcasing the music and voice students who took private lessons from the nuns. I just enjoyed the singing. Never could have afforded lessons. Once, my mom heard me singing and she mumbled "... sings just like her (natural) father..." She looked pained, so I never sang again where she could hear me. It somehow branded me as the child of someone else – shamed me. I realize as I say this now that this is why I edited the inner view: the accent also shamed me as different, the words and sentences as well ... editing to remove shame?!!

Um.. already the reading and the writing were already more advanced than those of the adults around me so I started taking another role which was ..um.. write thing for them, read things to them, ..um.. deal with, with government forms [laugh] all kind of, of ..uh.. papers that a child normally does not access so I became like the bookkeeper of the family like you know like for my extended family so that is one, one role there ..uh.. a responsibility of um knowing, that if you know you have to help others. That is taken for granted that is part of the responsibility and just do it. Nobody ask you; "Will you do it?" It's like; "You do it." Um those kinds of responsibility come in handy.

Um.. By grade three I was lost, grade three was horrible. I remember that. Um.. I was in a class, ..um.. we had split class in my, in my village. And ..um.. that was the first time I had a teacher that was not a nun. She was an older lady, she was a widow, she had a son that was in the same class. Well she seemed very old then, I don't know. She's, she was probably my age now. Um.. but any way, she seemed very old. Um.. she ..um.. used to do the seating arrangement by your grade on your bulletin so it was very obvious to everybody where you stood in the classroom. I scraped bottom that year, so I was at the far end of row three most of the year. I learned about the pecking order, it was humiliating.

Um.. we had a really difficult year in my family and, and ..um.. that put a lot of emotional strain on me. I got to the point where I detested going to school. Um.. I ..um.. was very ..uh.. and basically a lot of the attitudes of that teacher had to do with ..um.. her knowing family history. And that in, in a village where everybody is and had been born there. Your parents went to schools with these people, the history goes a long way so that sins of the past gets revisited and we get tarred and feathered. So you don't really have the, those uh chances that you have today in anonymous schools. And ..um.. so a lot of it there was very frustrating for me because I would add up certain marks and things would not add up ..um.. I would look up ..uh.., I didn't really ..um.. I didn't really fit in. I was a kid that was from the outskirts of the community I was not from the, the core of the village. Because the farms were on the outskirts and a little bit further out. We never participated in playground activities. We never participated in any of the fun ..um.., ..um.. There was no way after school really ..um.., ..um.. extracurricular. You did things during your lunch hour or those things. I was not an athletic kid that much. Like I mean I was fit. I was on

the farm. I was working around the farm. I always had things to do and I was always active but athletics as such, or sports, was not something that you did. Um.. it was actually considered a bit like a waste of time because it was not productive work. Um.. so my attitude already became that if, if you were doing something, you have to produce something. Some kids were "not allowed" to play with me … their parents made sure of that. I never knew why. My "best friend" moved away that year. I was isolated.

So that was the informal learning that was taking place at home and the school, of course you do a lot of busy work and I would get very impatient with the busy work. I didn't want to do the busy work and then when I couldn't do the things I wanted to do when the busy work was not done. So what I would end up with is falling way far behind because of, of those kind of restriction. Instead of saying just you know if you, if you need extra work to support what you are supposed to do, then ..um.. do the busy work. But if you don't have it, then you don't need to.

That was also the year where we had ..um.. the school had got in some money from the province and ..um.. they had to establish a library and I remember that each classroom had a book case at the back appropriate to the reading level and ..uh.. you could borrow books and all I wanted to do was borrow books and um eventually they cut me off from borrowing books because my busy work wasn't done and I was really frustrated with that. And ..um.. the, the school became a difficult place, a very difficult place where like I couldn't understand why they were doing learning that way. I couldn't understand why I couldn't just get to do the things I could do and then learn the things I didn't know but without having to do all this extra material because I was a quick learner so ..um.. I, I was loosing more and more interest. I was getting ..um.. more frustrated with it. Um.. there was no support from home and there was no help from home because there was nobody to help me with it. Uh.. the attitude at home was that ..um.. if you get yourself in trouble at school don't come crying home because if you've been punish there, you get punish here for getting in trouble. And get yourself out of trouble so the, the support was not really there. I got thrown out of religion class for asking too many questions and strapped for asking why people defending their lands (Indians) were seen as bad. Farms all had signs forbidding trespassing. I knew the meaning of land.

Um.. I doubled my third, third grade ..um.. and the following year I went to a different classroom and I had this brand new teacher. She was just out of Normal School. That was her first class and it was so exciting. She was so good. She was just, like it was a joy to go to school. Then we were a small group. It was a split class and ..um.. the grade three were just a small group so I met some, some uh girls there that were like I don't know, there was kind of a bonding suddenly and ..um.. I remember the first month the teacher said that somebody was leaving to grade four. That they had done so well that they were leaving to grade four and I thought it would be my new friend and surprised I was the one that was advanced. So I had then to catch up to grade four ..um.. a month later and go in there. We had gotten a new Mother Superior at the school. That summer I had been told about the adoption by my dad after his marriage with my mom. Suddenly words like bastard, half-breed, and other such terms as "Noirande" (Blackie) started to make a difference to me because they applied to me. My grandfather had always called me his Noirande, a term which had seemed affectionate now it also marked the fact that I was darker complexioned than my sister who was blond and blue eyed. The term had emerged from a differentiation due to a differentiation in colouring which also marked me apart.

The old teacher was gone. She had been retired. Um.. and I, I got like a second wind you know. Like wow it can be interesting, it can be fun again. So I got into there. Uh.. grade four was kind of a bridge between, like it was supposed to be a little bit more grown up in grade four you know so .. you had to go to grade five. So ..um.. the dynamics were very different. I was back again with the nuns. And ..um.. I still remember that in grade four, within a month of moving to grade four, the whole question of yes and no became very difficult to answer. Any question that had to do with a yes or a no became really uh difficult because then I, I started seeing things from two sides. And you can answer the same question with either a yes or a no depending on how you interpret the question. And I became very confused in that, in that it's like well, what do they want me to answer versus how do I want to answer and when is a yes, a yes and when is it a no disguised and when is it a no and a no meaning a yes and that was, I don't know if, if it was a splitting of something [laugh] but it was really interesting for me um that, that period of time. This was a year where my old Pepere died and also my sister was in critical condition for over three months.

Um.. the other years were pretty good ..uh.. five was great social year. I just loved it. I caught up to my friends. Um.. and, and that group of friends there, we went all the way to grade ten together. Like we're still, we're still in touch some of us. And that's quite interesting because we were, we were so few of us in that village and we went through all the major events of our lives pretty much at the same time. Like grade seven was like ..um.. where you do this ..uh.. major renewal of your baptismal vows. It is a great rite of passage in the Catholic and ..uh.. that was a highlight then like suddenly we were not children. We were young ladies. We were about fourteen at that time. So that was important. I had the same teacher grade four, six and seven, and she never got my name right in all three years.

Grade nine, like ..uh.. grade eight ..um.. and after like at grade seven, that's when also, after grade seven and the boys had to make a choice ..um.. you either continue to go to school or you stayed home to work. And a lot of my friends did not continue school so we ended up being six of us that continued to grade eight and nine. But there again you had another decision to make, or your parents made the decision based on your grades. And that was the stream that you would go to. Um.. people that were very practical would send their children for example to secretarial schools and bookkeeping and ..um.. all kind of office work. The, the people who saw maybe more potential were willing to send … Um.. the classical which would be the Greek, Latin, whatever; not too many people in our village went to that because you had to go and live in the city in order to attend those schools. The major question was always would you be allowed to go on to grade 9 – and when you got there would you go on to grade 10.

Um.. the other stream was the scientific stream where if you did well in math and science, you could then move into scientific ..um.. math and science stream. If you did well in ..uh.. second language, um literature it's really uh or the social field you went into the scientific literature field and then you would do your grade ten, eleven and twelve that way. And that would prepare you for entrance possibly to university and, and those kinds of, of training. There was always another one which was the commercial, trade ..uh.. all that for people who were going to go to grade ten and then enter a trade or enter ..um.. an apprenticeship. So those were the choices that were made at that time so it was very important to work on your books and, and do your work.

That, at the same time, ..uh.., I mean from the time I was ten I was raising a family, I was raising my brother and sisters, I was working on the farm because I was the oldest ..uh.. so I had responsibilities to help my dad. We didn't have a boy in the family so I had to fit in. Um.., I kept house, I did ..um.. meals, I did everything because my mom would be away for long period of time. Every time she was pregnant she had ..um.. high risk pregnancies so she had to be hospitalized for most of it and if the baby died then she had a nervous breakdown and had to be hospitalized again. So this continued on until I was sixteen. I was doing very well. Um.. I entered the scientific literature stream.

Um.. I, I enjoyed school, I enjoyed school because first of all there was, when I was at school I did not have to have all these responsibility for everybody else but the minute I finished school, when the school day was over, already my mind was well, what do I cook for supper and what do I have to do tonight and should I do the laundry this week or wash the floors this week. I'd do homework on the school bus. Because I, I can't do it all at the same time. And ..um.. looking after the others in the family and making sure everybody had everything they needed. So I, I was not the typical teenagers. I was having a double life right there.

Um.. I went to the Regional School and again there was a ..uh.. convent uh where they had a lot of, of kids from all over the eastern part of Quebec. So, and that's probably the only place where I found Native kids. But to me they didn't look native. They didn't look any different than most of the other kids. You know we all wore uniforms, hair pulled back. Except they came to that school and they lived there. So they had a part on the third floor. It was an old convent and on the third floor of the school they had maybe forty students that lived at the school for the whole school year. Um.. they came from ..um.. the ..um.. northern part of Quebec. They came from the eastern part, like going towards the Gulf of St. Laurence. And at the time Shefferville and ..uh.. Sept-Isles and all ..uh.. these towns that could be only reached by boat in the summer time and by plane so there were no roads.

So these people, these people would come in the fall and they would stay the whole year. They wouldn't even go home at Christmas or anything like that because it was too expensive. Um.. and they, they pretty much had an insular life. Like ..uh.. we had, they were in our classes and everything but we never really knew what they did after hours.

Um.. so ..um.. that was, that was interesting. And they were not allowed to visit or sleepover. They never really socialized with the other kids. Many were recruited to enter Normal School run by the nuns or to become nuns, in grade10 there was major pressure to do that.

Uh.. learning ..um.. I did enjoy learning. At sixteen I was pulled out of school because by that time we had six kids at home and my mom went into the hospital and so I was pulled out of school to look after everybody. We had to, we had four kids and then um two foster kids that we had and on top of that, I was babysitting the neighbours' two kids to have pocket money so I had basically three boys under the age of three and I had three girls under the age of seven. And uh, and then the rest, and I really resented being taken out of school at sixteen.

But that's also when ..um.. after fourteen, fifteen when I got to pass my grade nine, that's also when my family started talking about more about how I should be more, ..um.. there was so many things to be done and ..um.. it's almost like they wanted me to continue my education and yet at the same time the reality was that I was needed as a pair of hands and then that education for a girl was not as important and ..um.. so the double message is there. And the being pulled out at sixteen and ..uh.. being encouraged you know to start thinking; "Well, you know uh, this, this is good that you're getting all this training because when you get married and you, you're going to be there and at the time I was finally allowed to date so I had a boyfriend and he was from a large family. It was expected that when I turned eighteen we would get married and have large families and ..uh.. ..oh.., ..oh. You know, so, but then I started reading, I started reading so the money that I was making uh, by uh babysitting was turned into books. I read everything else I could get my hands on.

The following year I ..uh.. had to make some decision for myself. Uh.. I completely, in many ways, ..uh.. ignored ..um.. what my family wanted. Um.. and ..uh.. went back to school. I ..uh.. I remember Social Services to come and pick up those foster children. Um.. I did not baby-sit so now my responsibility turned down to three kids instead of six. It made my life much easier, which meant that I could then ..um.. go to school and still look after the family. But my friends had moved on. Um.. the, the peers that I had, had moved on. I was a year behind them. It meant that I would not graduate with them. Um..

and, and then there was a split there, there was again a sense of being alone. So I went back. I did my grade uh my grade eleven. I had to re-do it from scratch and I went to grade twelve but my ..um.. the pressure, the pressure at home was getting worse ..uh. It was now taken for granted that once I got my grade twelve that would be it. I would settle down and get married. Uh.. and I thought, hold on, I've been raising a family from the time I was ten. If that's all there is to life I don't want to do that. I don't want more of the same. Um.. I was not, I was having a lot of tensions with my mother. Um.. I ..uh.. resented ..uh.. the expectations. And ..um.. basically at eighteen I, I ..um.. I didn't even wait for my ..um.. my ..uh.. grade, my report cards or anything and ..uh.. I just ..uh.. went away for a weekend and never went back.

I had tried to run away at sixteen ..uh.. because I was still under age, of ..uh.., it was the summer before I turned sixteen. I had been returned home in great shame by the police so that was not, that was not a very positive experience. But I though the next time I ran you'll never bring me back. And I did. Um.. I went to work uh supporting myself. Uh.. I kept reading always but basically then my experience came to be education by being with other people, by looking at different things. I went to Montreal. Um encountering different people from different backgrounds. Uh just keeping my eyes and my ears open. Uh.. my mouth shut most of the time in those days. Um.. and just being very quick to pick up things. Um.. pick up skills and work. Picking people skills ..um.. and ..um.. it just went on from there. I worked in bars and clubs waitressing and saw much of the seedy sides of humanity where exploitation is a norm. Then a friend was killed in a raid and others overdosed. I realized it could have been me and I needed to get away from negative influences and to change my lifestyle. I started over.

Uh.. I always thought one day I'd go back and finish school. I had been short two credits for my grade twelve so it was not until I got married that I went back and did ..um.. ..uh.. went back and did those two credits to get my grade twelve. By that time I had already taken an apprenticeship in book binding. My love of books carried into my work. Um.. so I had a trades paper in book binding. I loved old books and ..um.. I also worked in accounting uh with the Royal Trust. And I started as a filing clerk and went on to senior accounting clerk and I took accounting and bookkeeping on the side. Before that, I took one year and came to work in Edmonton to learn English. I worked for a family as a maid

..uh.. for a year. And then I went back. Um.. I did different things but always with the idea that you learn and you better yourself and improve your conditions.

And then I got married and I went to work after that. I went back close ..um.. to Quebec City and then within six months I went back to work. I finished my grade twelve and then I went back to work for an insurance company. And again I started as a junior trainee and within three years I was senior underwriter. I took my courses for the ..um.. there are two, there are two papers that you can get for insurance people and one is ..uh.. I know them in the terms are French but Associate and Fellow of the Insurance Institute of Canada. And that's a number of courses that you take and the first level you take ten courses. And the second, the second level is eight courses so I finished the first level and I was, I work for them until 1980 in Quebec City and I had two courses left for the second level when I came to Edmonton continuing with the same company and ..um.. got divorced. I did not finish those courses because I get involved in other things and um, I don't know I was doing okay. I was still a senior underwriter but I was bored and I was still, ..uh.. it was like well is that all there is to life?

You know. I was still looking for results, I had traveled extensively, I went to Europe many times. Uh.. I did many of the countries there, the United States, ..um.. I had lived in different parts of Canada by then so already I had broken away from the earlier mode of the Quebecois approach where in, in the late sixties after I left home at eighteen I, ..um.. got involved into some of the, well on the fringe of some of the politics. And ..um.. ..uh.. with the separatist movement and ..um.. all of these events leading to the Crisis. And it was not until I started traveling outside of Quebec that my eyes opened up and saw that a lot of the ..um.. feelings of inferiority or the, the larger syndrome of it were the blaming in a way also had a lot to do with ..um.. a ready excuse at many times to ...

[For the purpose of clarification I asked, What do you mean by the larger syndrome?]

Well for example, in my family because nobody was wealthy, everybody was poor, they were illiterate, Uh.. there were a lot of mind sets there, there were certain things I had been taught that, while, what if you're born one of the same ..., if you're born with a little loaf, be happy with your little loaf. And it's like you don't go above yourself. And everything in me kept saying well you can better yourself. You know you're as good, as

smart. And why should I be left out, whatever. And ..um.., and this was a, was a contradicting value. So um instead of settling down where everybody has there for generations and you just settle in the same place, the same niche, I left.

Like I was a wanderer, like I was quite happy to get away. I didn't want to settle in that because what else would I be missing? So ..um.. there were a lot of, of these tensions and they're still there in my family. They still don't understand why I'm doing what I'm doing. Um.. my dad calls it irresponsible to leave a good job to go back to being a student when you're in your forties. Um.. and for many years I did pursue all the ..um.. materialistic rewards of life. Uh.. I lived in nice apartments. I had nice clothes. I had antique furniture, crystal and silver and all the tra la las. And I would go from buying one thing to another and I was empty. I was unhappy. I, I was miserable. And I could just say; "Is that all there is? People do this on and on and on for x number of years and what do they have at the end?" Um.. and that led me to a lot of, a lot of ..uh.. soul searching so by the time I hit thirty-five, I decided no. There, there's got to be more than this. I was dying. I wanted to die. That's also when I applied the practice of discernment to what had been reflection previously. Or maybe I became aware of being discerning in my reflection.

And ..uh.. I ..uh.. did a complete change in career. I went to work with people and ..uh.. got over some of the fears that I had of being with people after dealing with people only through information and statistics and financial reports and where the person is completely cut off from the figures that you're dealing with. So they're a case, they're a ..uh.. an application, they're, but they're not the person. So ..um.. and I went, I went and started working with people and ..um.. that was, that was for me very liberating but that's also when my lifestyle changed. Um.. like I mean, you know, watching the end of the month and not having the nice things and having to move from these nice surroundings and so on so forth. And, and basically over the years just losing more and more of these things and replacing them with other things that were more meaningful to me in terms of me finding myself and finding what was really important to me.

Um..so I, I had always wanted to go to university that had been a dream from the time I was young. And ..um.. I had never dare cross that line because I thought one day I'd find out that I'm stupid, you know. Uh.. and um maybe get, like so far it's gone okay but there was always a sense that I did not process the information the same way as other people.

And that somehow there was something that was, if only they knew me they'd really see that I'm not that smart. Okay? And ..um.. but I got away with it. Um.. I, I did my best to do things, but there were, there were ..uh.. certain topics I remember ..um.. math. Uh.. in grade uh eight and nine, math was all these theorem and the logic. I could not follow that. I could not follow those steps. I would follow only so far and then, to me, it was evident. And it was like; "Why are they adding these things there?" It didn't make any sense, you know. And even today I'm still told "when you're doing logic, you leap." And I, and I couldn't understand until ..uh.. that memory came back to me and I said "I was leaping even then."

So something, you know, did not connect. I remember some other formulas in math and, and algebra and, and all of these wonderful … I couldn't understand at all what they were talking about and ..uh.. one of the strongest moment was the week before my grade nine exams. We did a revision and I went home and I was so bogged down it was not even funny. Nothing made sense. And I, I dreamt. And I suddenly woke up in the middle of the night and everything was crystal clear. Everything was in place and it was like an epiphany. And I wrote one of the exams that had the highest mark … on the departmentals. Of course they changed me into the math and science stream because I had done so well on the exam and I, I keep trying to explain to them the following September in school; "But you don't understand. I don't know those things." But suddenly I understood them. [laugh]. You know but my heart was not in it, so I convinced them to keep me in the literature stream. And ..um.. I was quite happy there. But at, you know, moments like that where I was, I was always in complete chaos and not understanding at all what was, what the process was or the, what these formulas meant and why we had to do things in a specific way and suddenly it would go bang. And everything would be there.

Um.. I still remember ..uh.. when I did science and we, we had to do, every year we did, we had the basic science like physics and chemistry but then we had biology, we had zoology, we had all kind of other ..um … sciences as well. And it was fascinating. I loved that stuff. But the chemistry and physics, I was a little boggled down. And I still remember one day the teacher explaining about atoms and neutrons and protons and all of that and suddenly right in the middle of class I went; "Wow! If we all are made of these molecules, and these atoms are part of it, and the distance between them fluctuates, that

means that what I am seeing is not really what I am seeing. What I think is solid is not really solid. It's just that they're tighter. Therefore, if I really wanted to, I could actually take my energy and merge it with that other energy and become part of or let that thing become part of me. And it was a complete sense of communion. It was amazing, and I thought I don't need any more chemistry. I understood it. And to me that was the mystery of chemistry. I knew the formulas about salt, and all the formulas, all the other things we had to do. They became like an aside because this fundamental knowledge had come out and I felt it very deeply. And suddenly it connected to other things like "faith moves mountain," and I said "Yeah!" You can move anything you want because you could go through anything you want. You can just merge with it. "So chemistry became something very different then, then all these other little things the spirituality or a deeper connection .... was already there. Um.. certain laws of nature became very evident in, in, in ... once, you know, because I was looking at it from a very different perspective and nobody understood what I was trying to convey because I did not have the language then to convey what I was feeling or from where I understood things. So I, I was interested in what it was like Yeah, you have to make sense of it that's why you're teaching it. But I never had good marks in physics and chemistry because I didn't follow the "laws".

I think for me it was, it was the connection with nature that had been there, ..uh.. being on the farm when everything, everything is hands on. And yet you, you, there are certain things, certain laws that you respect automatically and you don't know they're laws. So there was, ..um.., ..uh.. an application of the practice that I had done on the farm and why we did certain things at certain times and how we did certain things had suddenly found a rationale in all of these explanations and I was like; "Oh, okay it takes this and that to do this." And so there was a practice and theory mix.

And but I still couldn't understand at times why somebody would start explaining something and already I knew the answer. I, I could not tell them how to get to the answer but I knew the answer and then it would take them an hour to get there and I'd say; "Yeah, but I was there an hour ago." So for me it became ..um.. an exercise in process versus the holistic view and I think that this is a skill that for me has worked very well in my work environment. Um.. I can, I can put a plan together to make something happen. I can have the idea of something and then I can break it down. Where a lot of people can come up with an idea. They have no idea how to make it happen. So I can do the two. I

can work from one side of the brain or I can work from the other side but the revelation as to how my brain work came when I turned forty and I decided to follow up on a... I have always wanted to paint. I had these beautiful pictures in my mind but I couldn't draw a straight line.

When I was in school, the first drawing lesson we got was to make a tulip. I still remember that. And they gave us a blank page of paper and then they gave us a ruler, and then they gave us a pencil. And the nun was at the front of the classroom saying; "Now you will take your ruler and you will measure from this side to the other side and put a dot. And then you're gonna make a line across the two dots. And then that's how we constructed this tulip and I thought; "That's not how a tulip looks." But it took my whole joy out of drawing, completely out of it because it was a mechanical drawing. ..... step by step.

So I had always wanted to paint ..uh.. and I turned forty and I went to, to a young Native man ..... who, who is a beautiful artist, just beautiful work, very creative and he challenges any medium. And anyway, I had ran into him and he says; "Oh, stop up by my place sometimes, you know. We'll talk." So anyway, and I had collected his work for a number of years since he had been a student at AVC. So I went to visit him and I remember ..um.. and he was talking. And we were talking about his work and I said; "How did you come up with all that?" He said; "You know, the hardest part is to come up with the idea in your mind." And he said; "The rest is skill and practice." He said; "If you can see it in your mind, and you ignore the fact that you have to tell your hand how to do it, your mind will tell your hand how to do it and it will come."

And I though, wow, forget about the two dots and the line and all that right? And he said; "If you want to paint, paint." And I said; "Well maybe I should take lessons and everything." And he said; "No. If you want to paint, paint then look at lessons." And I thought, well, I have to do something I'm forty years old. I have to do something different that I've wanted to do so I found myself, uh I, I bought some paint and I lined up, I, I put my name down for some basic lessons in drawing, you know, how to do things. And the very first night I remember I was so excited about this but yet I was afraid. And the teacher said ..um.. there were about fifteen of us around this girl and she says ..um..; "By the time you come out of here tonight you will have drawn." And I thought yeah you

must be joking. And ..um.. she, she had set up something in the corner and she says: "I want you to know that in nature there is no straight line. Um.. I also want you to know that everything is difference between light and dark." So she says; "That's what we're going to do tonight." And she had a display in the corner, she had a light in the hallway and she turned off the light in the main room where we were working and she says; "Now, what you see in that corner, I want you to put it on your paper." And I couldn't believe it, I thought she must be nuts, how do we do that, you know but I looked and I tried to replicate what I was seeing and everything else. I came up at the end of the evening and we came up ..... with a view of what we had seen and it was so interesting because I came out of there and I thought wow I can do something that I didn't know I could do. And I had a drawing, I had something that really looked like something. Um.. it was not abstract, I still have this drawing and ..um.. it has all the light and dark contrasts, it has all the shapes, the forms and ..um.. it was so liberating to be able to do that ah, ..uh.. I already had something that was beyond any expectation I had had when I first took that course and wow I'm on the first night and look what I've done and then I just relax and enjoyed it and, and it was really interesting because the friend that had supported my, my creativity, like he gave me paints for my birthday, and he paid me a course for Christmas and you know different things like that and I just enjoy it. It's very relaxing for me. It's still saying that I can lose the sense of time and place when I do that and I do the same as I do when I read.

So I just love it. Um.., ..uh.. and then that gave me the confidence, I said well okay, I'm forty, I'm grown up now. So what do I really want to do. What else, do I want to do? Because you make one dream come true and another dream says; "what about me?" And I thought I always wanted to go to university but I've always doubted my abilities, ..hm.. and I was already teaching. I did not have a teaching degree and the college was saying, if, if you have a teaching degree or, your teaching diploma ... we could then give you more work. I thought ..hm.., there are courses available through the college... They were just coming available and they were starting a cohort.... So I signed myself for one course. And uh again we moved as a group. There were fourteen of us. Twelve of us made it through all the courses together basically, at the same time. We would take the courses through Distance Education and the Faculty of Extension and once a month a teacher would come up from Edmonton and we'd gather in one place and ..uh.., had classes for the whole Friday night, and Saturday.

And that's how I, I got into the Adult Ed program is that I looked at the diploma, I was finishing the diploma. I said well why is that all for the diploma? I can, if I look at the requirements, I can, transfer to the degree. So ..um.. I ..um.. worked on that and I was working full time at the time. And then I came close to finish, I gave myself a year off after twenty-four years of working to come and finish my degree. I thought I'm taking this year for myself. And I came and sat on the benches of the University of Alberta. [laugh] and it was, it was great. And then within a month or so I saw the sign that says ..um.. put your pre-application for the masters and I thought, ..hmm.., well I've made it through this but I don't think I'm smart. But let's see if they would take me in the masters.

So then I applied for the masters and got accepted. And I finished m. Bachelor of Education and good old Klein cut all the funding. I did not have a job to g. back to and I thought well I'll stay and I'll do the masters. I went straight into the maste:. Then, I ran out of money so I had to finish it and uh by that time I thought yeah I'm c..ay. There are parts of me that are intelligent and there are the parts that can learn so, b.. I still, I still work with information in a very different way. It was the book by Luc.. Capacchione ..um.. about art and drawing from the other side of your brain ..uh.. that r..lly made me realize how my brain worked. Basically I think I was a right brain persc who learned very early to function in a left brain world. And once in a while I would h..ve these little epiphanies or this, this holistic look at things but it was not recognized.'.. I learned to function in the way that was recognized.

Well, I think that when you are surrounded with, with the reward in ed. ation system ..... by doing things in a certain way. Uh.. then you learn to perform in a certain way. You may not be completely comfortable but you just think well that's the way it is. You don't question it because you have not been exposed to anything else, right? And then even in the work that I did subsequently, everything was linear. So, when I get to the part where and I'm thinking okay I've got the main concept, I've got the idea, I understand it and then I have to read fifty page to get to the same conclusions, ... its like okay, we did all of this why wasn't it evident that you have to do all those things? Like the parts were there. But it was not until I read something, that validated that, that my, knowledge consolidated and mind, I went ..uh.. ..huh.., that's what it is, now that explains it. See

when you don't have the words and you don't have references to recognize what you have. The mirror is not there. You cannot come, come to it. Um.. it's really interesting, the same way as when there are certain things I do from the neck down only. Like when I'm playing cards and I pass cards, I can, I cannot shuffle, I cannot pass the cards from my right hand as much as I try and yet, and yet I'm right handed. There's a couple of other things that I will only do from my left side and when I, I started experimenting with these exercises that Capacchione talking about to discover if you're truly right or left brain. That's when I discovered that, damn, I'm basically left brain functioning in a right handed way.

Uh.. so that made things much easier for me to understand ..um.. and being able, when I do my work, to know when I'm functioning from right brain ..um.. perception as when I'm doing from the left brain. It's almost like it goes click, click a switch goes on, you know. I can catch myself. I know that I'm much more relaxed and much more pleasant and creative for me to work from the right brain. But if I get in the ..... mode and I switch to left brain, ..um.. I become tense, organized, precise, I become more aggressive, intolerant, ..um.. it's like I don't want to be distracted with people, it's like get out of my way. Let me get there and my focus is much narrower. Um.. and I can see the change in personality. That's, it affects me. It affects how I'm going through my day so uh having learned that, I've been able to apply it and, in my work and my studies and everything else. But I still at times, you know, resent it when I have to put a paper together. Uh.. when I have to ..uh.. write something. Um.. I [pause] I can get myself tied down, like I know the concept of what I want to put together, but because I want to have the reader understand I try to be systematic so I have to break it down into it's component, and I see it doesn't flow any more. Because it's, it's you're taking the circle and then you bring it back to a line. So the only way that I've been able to do it to my satisfaction is by doing the linear process and then taking the tail end of the linear process and bringing it back to where I started from. And that's about the only thing that gives me some kind of, of being able to convey where, where .... the way I started originally.

Um.. the other thing that I've been able to do with it is by ..um.. ..um.. the reflective, reflective work. When people talk about becoming reflective, well being reflective is always achieved by looking back. It's always by keeping an eye over your shoulder. But that is to me a cycle work. It's not a real linear process because you, you keep, and, and

we talked about the style before is that you keep learning, like if you look back, you'll see that similar events and keep adding information or situations keep presenting, themselves. It's just how you handle it might different or it might not. If it's not then sometimes you have to learn something new. Hopefully down the road you'll do it differently and then move on. But I, I see where cycles in life are created and that to me is very satisfying. I've done a lot of that type of work and it, it's, it's about the closest right now that it comes to me uh being able to put the linear and the cyclical as tightly folded together.

Throughout the inner view Suzanne held a rock. I marveled at how often Suzanne's story paralleled many aspects of my own.

> *The lack of validation, conformity, being treated differently, competing, shaming, responsibilities, and then becoming. From my experience in the orphanage I hid in my art, it was a place of my solitude and enjoyment. After leaving the orphanage and in a public grade school we took art as part of the curriculum and I can remember doing a simple drawing of a winter scene where a house was in the center of a field. The fields, the house, the roadway and walkway and the roof was covered by several days of snow. There was white smoke coming out of a chimney and a yellow glow coming from the window. I had painted the sky red and blue, but mostly red and blended them in a streaking fashion to represent those cold winter days in the country when the sun is rising and the night sky is fading. I reflected these colours on the snow and the house. As I was finishing the picture the teacher who had been visiting each child's desk checking our progress arrived at my desk. She grabbed the picture from my hands and asked me in a loud voice, "When did you ever see a sky like that?" and walked away with my picture. She never said another word to me for the rest of the class. The following day we had an open house and all the children's art was displayed. I didn't think my picture would be displayed but I was curious and went and looked at everyone's art pinned up around the room. I was surprised because mine was at the front of the class and two teachers were talking about it. My teacher was telling the other teacher everything that was wrong with the picture, particularly the sky. The other teacher liked the picture and said that "It reminded her of her grandparent's farm house and how the colours reminded her of how cozy the house was on a cold winter day." My teacher laughed, and said, "The purpose of the exercise was to draw a straight line and a simple picture that represented geometrical forms!" I never did get a good mark in that class because I couldn't visualize these simple forms without putting them in some broader context. The forms were lifeless and had little meaning to me. I guess I wasn't supposed to be thinking like that in grade four. As a result of that shaming I just conformed to whatever was required without any creative context. When I went to high school, I tried again and took an art class. It seemed it didn't matter what project I handed in, the drawings were appreciated but the form and*

composition were never right. I would start with a partial mark in the 90s and end up with just a pass because I didn't comply with a prescribed view of composition. There was no attempt at validating on the part of either teacher or to take that raw talent and develop it. It was always, "This is the assignment and its due on this date if you want it to be marked.." It was just another experience of shaming. I never did take another art class and again lost and opportunity for learning. At first I was eager to learn then learning became a struggle to maintain some dignity. I learned not to expect much from teachers. The teachers appeared to share the views held by the priests and nuns in the orphanage though in the public school those views were disguised under a thin veneer of civilized disinterest. I still continue to draw today, as a self-taught artist, yet I haven't breached that barrier to painting. The cycle of institutional shaming continued!

Not only do we live a life of feelings, we live a life of shaming if we do not conform to the prescribed norms of the dominant culture. The educational process as appears in this study is a shaming process. If all students are shamed in one way or another why is it that Indigenous people(s) are so affected by it?

Chapter 5

The Shaming Story: Discussion and Conclusion

When I thought about the stories and my story, I wondered how these children are any different than thousands of children who come from backgrounds of poverty, illiteracy, loneliness, and abuse. The attempts of cultural genocide and cultural penetration are the distinguishing feature that separate the Native person from the non-Native person. As the stories indicate the legacy of Indigenous educational shaming have been characterized as "traumatic stress disorder", "residential school syndrome" and "generational dysfunctional relationships" which I suggest "trigger" particular responses to social situations that impede learning in mainstream institutions. I have termed this triggering as an "institutional syndrome" that is evoked when some Indigenous people(s) experience situations similar to their own history of shaming. The purpose of this discussion is not to provide excessive detail but to provide some general understanding, within a marginal cultural framework, through references to concepts of cognitive orientation, creating the social mind, cultural consciousness, ethics and behaviour, and the "hidden curriculum."

Cognitive Orientation Within a Cultural Framework

Part of the answer to the question of "triggered responses" rests in the concept of the growth of culture, and the evolution of the mind, and the impact of the historical milieu of education. As Geertz (1973) asserts, "human intellection, in the specific sense of directive reasoning, depends upon the manipulation of certain kinds of cultural resources in such a manner as to produce (discover, select) environmental stimuli needed … by the organism; it is a search for information"(p. 79). Human beings are an emotional as well as rational animals, (Geertz, 1973, p. 81) because "by virtue of our thoughts and imagination we have not only feelings, but a life of feelings" (Langer, 1953, p. 372). Therefore, in this context "we are concerned not with solving problems, but with clarifying feelings"(Geertz, 1973, p. 81). As human beings cannot

perform efficiently in the absence of reasonably persistent emotional activity, cultural mechanisms provide continual varying sorts of sensory experiences that sustain harmony for such activities (Geertz, 1973, p. 80). Culture "denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life"(Geertz, 1973, p. 89). Symbols, or at least symbolic elements, "are tangible formulations of notions, abstractions from experience fixed in perceptible forms, concrete embodiments of ideas, attitudes, judgements, longings, or beliefs" (Geertz, 1973, p. 91).

Therefore the intrusion of the Western educational cultural ethic, argumentative confrontation, interfered with the Native symbolic models of emotion needed to make up our minds as Natives were disrupted and strange stimuli in terms of unfamiliar concepts were introduced that affected stability and evoked extremes of passion (Solomon, 1957, pp. 357-363; Chapman, 1958, pp. 491-534). It is important that we "... know how we feel about things; and to know how we feel about things we need the public [Native] images of sentiment that only ritual, myth, and art can provide" (Geertz, 1973, p. 82). These elements were not substantially present in the mainstream educational context.

Researchers such as Sperry, Bogen, Gassaniga and Orstein (cited in Browne, 1990, pp. 23-35) determined that the left hemisphere or the right hemisphere of the brain functioned differently depending on the task and the disposition of the learner when dealing with learning. The left hemisphere functions in linear, sequential information processing and abstract thinking, while the right hemisphere specializes in relational, simultaneous information processing and holistic thinking. Native students tend to be culturally conditioned to right hemisphere (holistic) learning. Yet they are placed in a left hemisphere system and expected to succeed. Browne (1990) examined the test results of 197 Native students on the WISC-R and noticed a clear pattern different from the standardization population. Native students were found to be characteristically right hemisphere dominant learners. Swisher and Dehley (1989), cited in Sawyer (1991), describe

their definition of the learning style of Aboriginal students as follows: "The body of research which examined the learning styles of American Indian students ...presents some converging evidence that suggests common patterns or methods in the way these students come to know or understand the world. They approach tasks visually, seem to prefer learning by careful observation which precedes performance, and seem to learn in their natural settings experientially (p. 5). The complex interplay between cognition and affect can be called an "orientation," which is defined by Snively (1990) as a tendency for an individual to understand and experience the world through an interpretive framework, embodying a coherent set of beliefs and values.

This study suggests that a relationship exist between an individual's set of orientations and the manner in which learning takes place. What the cited studies fail to consider is that the Indigenous way always considers the wholeness of things. Life is viewed as an interactive "open-ended process" (C. Pompana, personal communication, July 7, 1980) within the physical, social and spiritual environments. The spiritual environment has been a fundamental aspect of Native learning that is "inward looking" that establishes a coherent set of beliefs and values, and understanding that "all existence is connected and that the whole enmeshed the being in its inclusiveness" (Ermine, 1995, p. 103) to their world. In the Native view, when there is harmony of interaction, there is balance and balance is necessary for Native learning. As people lose cohesion with their world, they also lose touch with themselves; as they are in disharmony with their world, so are they in disharmony within themselves. They may dislike their world and themselves and act accordingly.

Creating the Social Mind

Brothers (1997) argues that society creates a "social mind" and "that some neurons respond preferentially and selectively to social aspects of our world ... and the brain assembles these responses into coherent descriptions of the social environment" (p. 37). Our "brains are evolutionarily prepared to generate certain responses to particular social situations. These

responses are encoded in links between sensor representation of social events, and bodily changes - links that form especially in the amygdala where stimulation may produce feelings that are specifically appropriate for social situations" (Brothers, 1997, p. 52). The social feelings are elaborated and articulated through concepts available in the family system and culture in which they occur (pp. 52-53). While brains have the capacity to generate the concepts of person and social order, Brothers argues their specific form is acquired from exposure to a particular culture (p. 80). Culture transmits the content of who we are as well as social order through narratives and performances. Thus, " the function of narrative is to reveal and comment on the language of the social order – that is, on the shoulds, oughts, entitlements, and justifications of everyday life" (Brothers, 1997, p. 80). It acculturates, through story telling, performance and imitation and turns arbitrary social situations into felt reality for the participants (pp. 81-82). The fundamental acculturation of Indigenous people(s) are subjective experiences and introspection (Ermine, 1995, p. 102) and search for harmony.

Cultural Consciousness

Thus, we are adapted not only to form the concept of person, but also as receptacles both for communal stories and for performances of what it means to be a person – what a person in one's culture or one's family should do, think, and say. Moreover, we are highly flexible in this regard, even eager to redefine each other and ourselves through our interactions (Brothers 1997, p. 100).

Spradley (1979) suggests that culture is not only the "acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behavior" but also includes our interactions which redefines that knowledge (p. 5). We acquire the cultural principles or rules for acting and interpreting things through particular shared meanings (p. 6). As meaningful experiences, we act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the experience has for us which derives from social interaction that is learned, revised, maintained, and defined within a particular culture.

Spradley (1979) asserts that "we may see this interpretive aspect more clearly if we think of culture as a cognitive map" (p. 7). In the recurrent activities of daily life we refer to this map that guides our action for interpreting our experience and as such are culturally bound (p. 11).

The critical point for me is what I would call "Cultural Consciousness," not only that we understand that we view our experiences through our acculturation but that other people interpret the same experience through their own cultural lenses. Cultural consciousness not only indicates that an individual is aware that "appropriate behaviour is defined and then dictated by specific kinds of Aboriginal ethics" (C. Pomana, personal communication, August 15, 1998), but actually lives those ethics. When cultural consciousness is expressed as an "ethos - the tone, character, and quality of life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood - and a worldview - the most comprehensive ideas of order" (Geertz, 1973, p. 89), ritual and ceremony provides an experiential understanding of the interrelationship between body, mind, and spirit that underpin ethical behaviour and its relationship to the ambient environment. This is one of the dilemmas of surviving in two worlds.

In Ermine's (1997) discussion of Aboriginal epistemology (pp. 101-112) he argues that non-Native search for knowledge and understanding, Western Science, is an outward looking process of learning while Native learning is a process of inward looking as well. This process is aptly expressed below:

> Indication that Aboriginal people were attaining knowledge of a very different nature and purpose from Western peoples is evident in Aboriginal language and culture. Ancestral explorers of the inner space encoded their findings in community praxis as a way of synthesizing knowledge derived from introspection. The Old Ones had experienced totality, a wholeness, in inwardness, and effectively created a physical manifestation of the life force by creating community. In doing so, they empowered the people to become the "culture" of accumulated knowledge. The community became paramount by virtue of its role as repository and incubator of total tribal knowledge in the form of custom and culture. Each part of the community became an integral part of the whole flowing movement and was modelled on the inward wholeness and harmony.... the Old Ones, the guides of our communities, have instilled in the young a sense of wonder and have sought to encourage young minds to recognize and affirm mystery aesthetically and

> spiritually. ... the Old Ones talked about the inner cosmology. The plants and animals were a vital nexus in comprehending the sophisticated directional maps into the metaphysical. Only by understanding the physical world can we understand the intricacies of the inner space. Conversely, it is only through journeys into the metaphysical that we can fully understand the natural world. The Western education systems that our children are subjected to promote the dogma of fragmentation and indelibly harm the capacity for holism (Ermine, 1997, pp. 105-110).

The impact of mainstream contact and the educational socialization disrupt these "cognitive maps," creating marginalizing situations that "seldom provides complete cultural guidance and support"(Stonequist, 1937, p. 217) for the individual. Some Aboriginal children suffer not only from poverty and abuse but also are continually seeing themselves as being shamed. This insight is facilitated from viewing the mainstream culture through an Indigenous cultural consciousness. The lived ethics and the learned transmission of holistic knowledge are seen to be continually attacked through schools "shaping" with fractionalized knowledge that minimizes and trivializes the fundamental beliefs of Native culture.

Ethics and Behaviour

A renaissance is occurring among educated Natives today. Without forgetting those who remain in poverty and degradation on the reservations and in urban centers, as a Native I want to bring attention to those who have discovered that to survive in contemporary Society requires an ability to live their own values astride two cultures (Crozier-Hogle, 1997). Wintrob and Diamen (1974) point out in their study of Mistassini Cree Youth that much of White attitudes and values are undesirable to them, yet the lifestyle material culture is almost overwhelmingly (p. 335), drawing children away from traditional nomadic lifestyles of hunting and fishing.

Their study indicates that the:

> ... present generations of young people is consistent in its rejection of the traditional way of life, yet many express a desire to retain its values in

> contrast to those they see operating in the 'white world'. Most students speak somewhat wistfully of the personal freedom, self-reliance, spirit of mutual respect, cooperation and harmony with the natural environment which they recognize in the traditional way of life. ... In fact there are at present few attractive role models for the life style that many of the young people would like to adopt, and this contributes to the conflicted feelings many express when discussing their personal future ...(Wintrob & Diamen, 1974, pp. 337-338).

Claire Brant, (1990) an Iroquois psychiatrist, asserts that variations "in customs, beliefs, ideals and aspirations, as well as psychosocial differences, are well documented and generally accepted (p. 534). Based on direct observation during 24 years of medical practice and other forms of association with Iroquoian groups of southern Ontario and Quebec, the Ojibway of southern Ontario, and the Swampy Cree of James and Hudson's Bay, Dr. Brant (1990) says that "...Native ethics, values, and rules of behaviour ...persist in disguised form as carryovers from the Aboriginal culture and which strongly influence Native thinking and action even today" (p. 534). Although the author believes, based on extensive interaction with Native people across Canada and the northern United States, that these ethics and rules of behaviour exist in all tribes of North America, his observations were confined primarily in Ontario and Quebec (p. 534).

The Sioux words "Mitakuye Oyasin" (Ross, 1995) forms the basis of my understanding of harmony – all things are related (loosely translated) and there is a desire to be inwardly balanced and in harmony within the ambient environment. This worldview is contextualized by a number of ethics that are shared by many native people. There are any number of sources and interpretations of native ethics that prescribe behaviour, however, I only refer to two sources and my own Native understanding as a starting point to penetrate the cultural boundness that perpetuates the gap between Native and non-Native cultures.

Having been conditioned through generations of contact with other cultures Native ethics are not necessarily self-evident, nor are they absolute, nor practiced by all Native people(s). The

use of English to interpret many of the Native ethics is wholly inadequate. The language does not have the words that express the feeling and the many deeper meanings of some of these ethics. I am not suggesting that these ethics are exclusive to Indigenous culture and do not appear in various forms and interpretation in other cultures; what differentiates them from other culturals ethics are that they are the very fabric of Aboriginal life. The desire is to remain in harmony, without conflict and preserve those life-giving energies that maintain life within the ambient environment. Brant (1990) asserts it is "the suppression of conflict practiced through the ethics of non-interference, non-competitiveness and emotional restraint" (p. 535) that maintains harmony. My understanding from the teachings of several Elders is that conflict, as expressed in anger, was never originally suppressed but was dealt within experiential domains of the inner and outer ways of knowing. The angry person was directed by the Elder to "go over there, sit down, hold your pipe and I'll come over and see you " or told to "go for a walk." The Elder would allow angry persons to verbalize their anger, reflect on the reason for their anger and come to the realization of how harmful it is to their own well-being, the well-being of the group and of all Creation (C. Gibson, Sioux Elder, personal communication, May 15, 1985). These are the ethical principles on which the culture was developed. This was not a response to inequity or a sense of dominance, equality was expressed in honouring and respecting that "all things were related" and had purpose for the survival of the whole. As Ermine (1997) states:

> In no other place did the individual have more integrity or receive more honour than in the Aboriginal community. The individual's ability as a unique entity in the group to become what she or he is ultimately meant to be, was explicitly recognized. There was explicit recognition of the individual's right in the collective to experience his or her own life. No one could dictate the path that must be followed. There was the recognition that every individual had the capacity to make headway into knowledge through the inner world. Ultimately, the knowledge that comes from the inner space in the individual gives rise to a subjective world-view out onto the external world (p. 108).

This is one aspect of the meaning of the ethic of non-interference – balance and harmony. It also encompasses the principles of respect and honour for the individual and that person's capacity to become whatever one is to become. In Brant's (1990) and Ross'(1992) discussions of ethics they appear to delineate a number of Native ethical principles, possibly because of the use of English and the written word they are presented as separate units. I do not see these aspects as being mutually exclusive to one another. The practice is intricately interwoven with many levels of meaning and understanding, and find expression in words like non-interference, honouring, respect, sharing and so on, in the attempt to preserve life energy and harmony. Non-interference is a conscious behaviour that is applied to particular activities with the intent to do no harm. If unconscious harm is created by the application of non-interfering, when that harm is acknowledged, it must be corrected to restore the balance and harmony. For example, the picking of sweetgrass is done in a particular way so that the roots are not harmed, to ensure that it will grow again for the benefit of the ambient environment. They are most often described with examples from traditional Native communal living that might suggest they are only an event in that setting. The purpose of this discussion of ethics is not to provide a detailed discussion of particular ethics but to provide the reader with some understanding of the practice of ethical behaviour through references to the stories.

As seen in Mary's story, although she held beliefs different from the other Native students at school in Edmonton, they respected her and did not try to impose their beliefs. Mary states that,

> ..they didn't bring up what we each believed in. Whatever they had to say I listen to them, what I had to say they listen..". [They]"..were my best friends through school, they help me, they didn't care like what …well they did care like, about what I thought and believe in and they listen to me ..ah.. and they never ever said anything and ..um.. they help me through school and stuff and …

Brant (1990) cites Wax and Thomas (1961) who argue that "A high degree of respect for every human being's independence leads the Native to view instructing, coercing or attempting to

persuade another person as undesirable behaviour"(p. 535). The practice of instructing is not undesirable behaviour, but it is the way that it is done that is objectionable. "Accordingly, group goals are arrived at by consensus and achieved by reliance on voluntary cooperation"(Brant, 1990, p. 535).

Any interferer is perceived "as an attempt to establish dominance, however trivial, and he would be fastidiously avoided in future" (Wax & Thomas, 1961, p.535). Another example would be, "We are very loath to confront people. We are very loath to give advice to anyone if the person is not specifically asking for advice. To interfere or even comment on their behaviour is considered rude" (Ross, 1992, p. 13). Another way of practicing the ethic is through stories of experiences that indicate the appropriate action to be taken and the promotion of self-actualization. Willie Blackwater, interviewed for the writing of the book Stolen from Our Embrace expressed this practice as: "My grandparents taught me and corrected me without ever raising their hand or voice to me. If I did something wrong my grandfather would tell me a long story, and I had to figure out for myself its meaning and what it told me about what I had done" (Fournier & Crey,1997, p. 82; Millar, 1997). When this ethic is practiced appropriately it maintains harmony and balance with the ambient environment.

Brant (1990) defines non-competitiveness as averting intra-group rivalry and preventing any embarrassment that a less able member of the group might feel in an interpersonal situation (p. 535). He uses sports as an example to make his point that Natives "are rarely heard to cheer team mates even if a home run is hit." I believe that it was and is a deeper conviction than expressed by Brant, and is more evident, particularly in our society with the legacy of residential schools, foster homes, and orphanages, it was an avoidance of shaming of others that attacks the very essence of being that ethic was meant to curtail. There is historical evidence of competition in Native culture in activities such as gambling, lacrosse, hunter's games and "counting coup" (Mails 1996, p. 295). These activities were originally seen as good-hearted games, (this

perception may have changed over time or was misrepresented) which recognized achievement and responsibility, development of skills, group bonding and encouragement to other members of the group. The idea of embarrassment with regards to games was not an aspect of competition, rather that good-natured teasing, joviality and cheering were the way it was thought about (T. Remi-Sawyer, personal communication, October 15, 1993). Therefore, games might not be the best example for a discussion of this ethic and may suggest to some that it was practiced in every situation.

The "Old Ones" I believe, knew the ill effects of shaming and the importance of the ethic of non-interference but did not see it as being practiced in every nuance of life. It was a ethic that each person must be aware of and consider before acting. For me it is closely akin to the desire "to do no harm" and "think before you speak" (L. Kinnunwa, personal communication, May 29, 1998). Ross (1992) calls this the "conservation-withdrawal tactic," the mental-preparation of thinking things through before actually trying them and refusing to act until the terrain was familiar, particularly in situations of stress and danger (p. 35). Poorly considered or hasty responses are seen as having the potential of damaging or creating severe harm, even death, and as such would interfere with the well-being of the individual and therefore the group. Careful consideration was necessary before asking or answering a question, or commenting on a situation or event. As in the case of the inner views I conducted, I ensured that the participants had the question several days prior to the inner view, respecting the ethic of conservation-withdrawal. I also attempted to convey the introspection, discernment and feelings throughout, including the pauses and repetition as the interviewer thought through their story and returned to the same theme as new insights were gained, maintaining the sentences that ran on and on – "pouring out" and the sighs as the feelings of loss of connectedness. The answer to the question may not be what you expected, it may be answered indirectly and the facility of listening becomes important.

Generally, asking direct questions are inappropriate when conversing with Indigenous people(s). They are perceived by some Indigenous people(s) as being rude, they do not allow a

sufficient amount of time to think about the answered and to comment directly might be considered interfering. Ross (1992) learned that when he asked direct questions the responses were often "... answered by shrugs of the shoulders or "I dunno." On occasion, the response would consist of a rambling story that didn't even mention the events or the people under consideration"(p. 21).

Ross' experiences in exploring Indian reality are instructive:

> Just as importantly, I felt Charlie watching me and, in his gentle way, educating me to traditionally proper behaviour. Loyal to his cultural commandments, Charlie never criticized what I did nor told me directly how to conduct myself. Instead, he told me stories as we flew from place to place. In time I learned how to listen to those stories, how to see beyond their casual appearance. To say that they contained lessons would be wrong, instead, they crystallized various scenarios within which some choices would clearly be wise and others inappropriate (1992, pp. xviii-xix).

Native people do care about things that impact their lives but are often not heard because, in many instances, we have lost our ability to "really listen" to what is being said. As Ross (1992) began to learn how to listen, two things became clear:

> First, contrary to my earlier impression, it was obvious that people not only cared a great deal about things but had also given them a great deal of thought. Second, they most certainly held definite views about what the appropriate responses should be. They would not, however, give those views directly. Instead, they would recite and subtly emphasize, often only through repetition, the facts that led towards their preferred conclusions. The listener, of course, had to find that conclusion himself. It became, in that way, his conclusion. As I became better at listening, people had more to say (p. 22).

When Ross (1992) learned that the appropriate way was not to ask direct question the results were different:

> I did not ask for advice, or even for a recommendation. Instead, I spoke out loud about the various factors which had to be considered in coming to a decision...I let the problems pose themselves, without ever directly expressing them. Then I noticed a change. People started to speak. I had to endure long silences, against my every inclination, but I knew that if I

> jumped in to fill them that the discussion would end. Nothing could be hurried, nor could anyone be interrupted as they too did their thinking out loud. Their contributions generally took a similar form, which amounted to recitations of the various factors involved. On occasion, those recitations would be joined with long stories involving other peoples, times and places. Over time I began to see that their recitals of fact, often repeated in a different chronological order, as if being chewed over, revealed an emphasis on certain facts rather than others. ... It was as if the speaker wanted to say that in his or her view those particular facts were more significant than others. Invariably, concentration on those emphasized facts led more towards one sort of conclusion than another (p. 21).

Equally important to listening is how one responds in the Indigenous community to the information provided. Verbal expressions of praise and gratitude are embarrassing and impolite, especially in the presence of others. The proper course is to quietly ask that person to continue making their contribution (Ross, 1992, p. 3). Looking someone straight in the eye is rude and is interpreted as meaning that you consider that person as inferior. To demonstrate respect looking down or to the side, with only occasional glances up to indicate attention, is the appropriate behaviour. Within some non-native cultures this practice is seen as evasive behaviour. Those who have that perceptions "discount what people say when they won't hold our eyes, concluding most often that they are insincere and untrustworthy" (p.4). "Above all else, whenever we find ourselves beginning to draw negative conclusions from what the other has said or done, we must take the time to step back and ask whether those words and acts might be open to different interpretations, whether that other person's actions may have a different meaning from within his cultural conventions" (p. 5). Throughout the 'inner views revealed in the stories', all participants displayed these verbal and para-verbal communication behaviours which maintained the principles of honouring, respect and non-interference. Not only did they repeat parts of their stories several times, there were long periods of silence as they reflected and expressed their sense of loss and overcoming. They expressed what they saw as important in their educational experiences.

The Roots of Shaming in Public Education

Deanna (Mountain Woman) characterized the process of shaming as the "detribalization" of Native children. The process of detribalization in education consisted of every activity being controlled by European rules intended to teach obedience to discipline, absolute obedience reinforced by shame, strapping and harsh denial (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 57, p. 63). What distinguishes European schooling of Native peoples from non-native people was the attempt to eradicate the Native way of learning and supplant it with the "Monitorial Method" of teaching (Sterling, 1992) as it applied to Native children.

Native cultural and spiritual traditions, are founded on an immutable bond between children and extended families, honouring and respecting all life. As Stonequist suggests the early periods of contact represented a profound clash of cultures, and "nowhere can that conflict be seen more starkly than in the radically opposed attitudes towards childhood" (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 52) and teaching. Aboriginal children were considered an integral part of the family and their future society who learned by listening, watching and carrying out tasks suited to their gender. While Native societies have diversity in language as well as cultural and spiritual practices, they "shared a remarkable commonality in their approaches to child-rearing (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 52). They placed their children at the center of a belief system closely aligned with the natural world. The economic and social survival of their societies depended on the communication of a vast amount of spiritual and practical knowledge from the Elders to the young, through an exclusively oral tradition and cyclic process of learning. Native children were taught in a caring way through sharing, story telling, demonstration, observation and modelling for long-term learning and critical thinking (Hollihan, 1997, pp. 283-288).

Storytelling provides one of the best examples of these processes that made learning fun and are told from generation to generation. Brant (1990) provides an excellent analysis of this process: " in teaching their children, some White people seem to use "shaping" – that is,

rewarding learners for successive approximations of the behaviour that they have been instructed to carry out" (p. 537). With the Native modelling method one is "shown how" rather than "told how." The teacher does not purport to know more than the student, but through demonstration conveys useful and practical information that the student has the choice of accepting or rejecting. The student is never placed on the spot by being required to perform before being adequately trained. "This reduces his performance anxiety and increased his loyalty to his teachers, who usually are parents and older members of his extended family" (Brant, 1990, p. 537). Brant (1990) concludes that modelling "seems to increase attachment to the older members of the group, promoting group cohesiveness and continuity"(p. 537) and enthusiasm for learning. Sterling (1992) talks of her grandmother's communication as: "... that of storyteller, which in turn entertained, taught, and controlled them, not with fear or guilt, but with interest" (p. 169).

The transmission of the knowledge and style of learning was disrupted with the merging of church and state within the institutions of Indian residential schools. This is nowhere more evident than in the following passage:

> The churches could harvest souls at government-funded schools while meeting the shared mandate to eradicate all that was Indian in the children. With Confederation in 1867, the new national government was charged under the British North America Act with constitutional responsibility for Indian education. Limited experience had already indicated that day schools could not accomplish the government's goal of fully severing ties between aboriginal parent and child. In 1876, the federal Indian Act effectively rendered all aboriginal people children before the law, legal wards of the Crown. [In Nicholas Flood Davin report of 1879] .. It was accepted that the Christian obligation to Indians could be discharged "only through the medium of children." The well-being of First Nations left bereft of their children was not addressed. Adults could not be rescued from "their present state of ignorance, superstition and helplessness,"as they were "physically, mentally and morally ... unfitted to bear such a complete metamorphosis." Pragmatically, ... the schools were "a good investment" to prevent Indian children from becoming "an undesirable and often dangerous element in society. An Indian Affairs department was created in 1889, and Indian agents duly dispatched across the country. As the local hand

> controlling the government purse strings, the Indian agent could threaten to withhold money from increasingly destitute aboriginal parents if they did not send their children away to school, he could even throw them in jail (Fournier & Crey, 1997, pp. 53-55).

As in Deanna's case she was dragged screaming and biting into an institution of hierarchical structure and a system that met the needs for economy and control and acceptable mastery of prescribed knowledge. Instruction came first, with little consideration for the child (Brauner, 1964 cited in Sterling). This was compounded by a one-way top-down communication system, "a military-type hierarchy in which obedience to authority and responsibility within the chain of command were paramount" (Sterling, 1992, pp. 169-170). Generally the "Monitorial Method" conceives of the child as "a small beast", naturally disruptive and thus in need of being controlled first, then trained with group discipline through obedience, to effectively organize for drills and memorization (Brauner, 1964, p. 244). Instruction consisted of drills, memorization, and perfect recitation. It involved a compartmentalization of knowledge into discreet and separate units of instruction, with fixed standards of assessment that defined winners and losers.

The Native philosophy of relatedness and wholeness, characterized by a sphere that represented the egalitarian and humanistic view of learning, was not part of this model. While child centered learning was in vogue in the latter 1960s and 1970s, and attempts have been made to use different teaching styles, (Taylor & Runte, 1995) the Monitorial model unfortunately remains predominant in public education. The stories in this study are filled with examples of the monitorial model. As Deanna (Mountain Woman) points out,

> Native students fail because they are not connected to the teachers who have different teaching styles and the students have different learning styles. If they are not connected the child is not going to learn. It's also a matter of understanding what is relevant to the child's well-being, so in order to understand what is important to them in their world, in their worldview you have to focus on that and use their knowledge base as a teaching tool. Rather than teaching them what you think, or the majority of society. Listen to them, just teach them what they want to know, teach them what they have to know, in order to be functional, like the core subject areas but use their interests and your worldview as their

> interest and what they consider to be relevant. Use those as tools, as teaching tools to enlarge their knowledge base.

The essential difference between the two cultures is that in the Native worldview the child is placed at the center of the culture whereas the European view places the adult at the center of the culture. In the European model the child is shaped into what the adult thinks is appropriate while, in the Native world, the child is guided to become "whatever the child is to become." Learning is not a process of shaming, guilt, and absolute obedience to the authority of the teacher and prescribed knowledge, but an acceptance or rejection of the information provided in a caring and sharing way. The talents, skills, and interests of the Native child are nurtured to fulfillment and considered a life long learning process.

Deanna provides an insight important to long term learning to Native people:

> ...you keep going back, back and forth between the two worlds and somehow you get the feeling that what you learned from your grandparents and the Elders is something you have to hide, but you need it for life. But you have to hide it because no one wants to see it. The White society, nobody wants to hear about it and yet you understand that it is life giving for you. But you hide it so there is a shame base there that was built into us from the time we were small. You also understand that you needed the education in order to get a job. In order to get out of that poverty you were living.

Ruth, who attended primary school and most recently attended college recalls that the:

> The teachers and the principal were very mean if we didn't have our assignments done, we would get into trouble and a lot of the time I was always sent to the office or was sitting out in the hallway. So that it got to the point where I didn't want to go to school. I stopped going to school at age ten because I couldn't do the work and because we were always being yelled at by the teacher.

Even when she returned to school as an adult these conditions had not really changed. Her classmates were a mixture of Native and non-Native students and one teacher "triggered" her childhood memory of teachers by "putting down" students in class in front of the other students. The teacher would ask a question then say "no that is not the right answer." She knew what

Native students were "timid" and "wouldn't speak up for themselves," she picked on them and yelled at them. One girl was "really embarrassed and cried and was going to quit but, I kept encouraging her" to continue at school. This shaming example demonstrates the continued assault on students, White and Native, when teachers are not aware or sensitive to the cultural reaction to being "put on the spot". It also triggered Ruth's "social mind" and her own experience with verbal abuse and the feelings of shame she endured as a child. As an adult, not a helpless child, she responded by complaining about the teacher to the authority of the Institution.

In terms of Geertz's definition of culture, Ruth's story illustrates the insensitive attack on the Native Worldview. One of the instructors was fired from the school because, as Ruth recalls, "she was bringing a lot of Native culture and the Board didn't like that and tried to change it. I think the sweats really helped me a lot in my learning and, kept me in school because it was balancing off my life when I was getting stressful". The final example which comes from the same story, demonstrates the imposition of a prescribed format, regardless of the cultural context, of a poem. "I wrote a poem and it was coming from my heart and the English teacher started putting high, really high, high linguistics in there and I told her no I'm not changing my poem because this is ... these words are coming from my heart...." The teacher was completely insensitive to the Native concept of "speaking from the heart", insisting instead on the form and language of the mainstream culture.

The Hidden Curriculum

One might argue that the circumstances described above are the exception to the general rule and that the abuse characteristics of residential schooling no longer exists. I suggest that, while the overt, physical and sexual examples of abuse may not be as prominant today they still exist covertly in the "hidden curriculum" and continue to penetrate Indigenous culture. When mainstream education is considered from a Native perspective, it appears that the youth are being

conditioned to accept a particular worldview and sublimely shamed about their cultural worldview.

Various scholars have described the mechanism for conditioning as the "hidden curriculum." Hewitson (1982), for example, attributes the following characteristics to the "hidden curriculum:"

> Learning the hidden curriculum is not the result of deliberate efforts on the part of learners, but is mainly inferred on their part. Such learning accrues over time as a seemingly inevitable consequence of continued exposure to delimited perceptions of reality. In this regard, it is something "done to" learners, not something done with them or with their conscious assent. What is perceived or inferred by learners comes to be taken as the natural order of things, i.e. their social reality appears to have been ordained by nature rather than structured by man. At the societal level, the source of the hidden curriculum lies in the way the school system is structured and resourced to achieve the functions for which it is established and maintained. Broadly speaking, these functions have to do with preparing learners for future roles in society. At the school and classroom level, the hidden curriculum is learnt through structures and rules as well as through attitudes and values espoused by school staff, school text books, school syllabuses and the student peer group" (p. 1.)

Hewitson (1982) argues that "the hidden curriculum is also associated with delimiting the consciousness of new generations of school-children so as to avoid conflict with the predominate ideology. This is achieved by excluding, from the curriculum, all material which might "subvert" childrens' ways of thinking about the world" (p. 7).

From the Native perspective the hidden curriculum is not hidden. However, Native students already have another worldview that is in conflict with the predominate ideology. From the Native worldview they can see the overt exclusion of a whole sets of beliefs and values that are not part of any curriculum and, as such, minimizes, trivialize, and marginalize their Indigenous values. Gearing and Epstein (1988) state that, side-by-side with the manifest curriculum, is a set of tacit assumptions, unspoken but acted-out in school which simultaneously are about the underlying nature of a broader community and thereby being taught and learned" (p. 243).

Most recently, my own six year old grandchild questioned why it is that in school they are taught about Nature and we talk about Mother Earth. From the Native perspective the earth is consider to be like a mother who nurtures and provides for her children who live upon her. The earth is respected as a mother is respected and should neither be harmed nor conquered, or used with wanton regard for the consequences, a perspective held by some people in other cultures. My granddaughter was perplexed as to how people could contaminate the environment when she was taught not to harm the earth. Her reconciliation with this dilemma was that she was not going to do anything that would harm Mother Earth. Spindler's (1988) comment on cultural transmission and the hidden curriculum in Doing the Ethnography of Schooling, that the "... hidden curriculum, a pattern of expectations and relevant behaviors, operates to defeat declared educational intentions"(p. 237), was already recognized by my six-year old granddaughter. Mary's story provides another example of two sets of beliefs that "triggered" an inner struggle to bring into harmony two different beliefs. Mary appeared to use the conservation-withdrawal tactic until she was familiar with the situation.

For Zeigler and Peake (1971), the purpose of the hidden curriculum is fulfilled by the elimination, interpretation, dilution and emphasis on particular kinds of knowledge which critically define limits to the consciousness of students and impairs their ability to ask meaningful questions (Deloria, 1995; 1997). Hewitson (1982) states "that traditionally the major effort of the schools has been directed at the cognitive and intellectual development of students" (p. 9), that is, the acceptance of hierarchical structure as being natural to the exclusion of other structural forms such as the notion of cyclical processes. School administration and management are structured hierarchically and emphasize top-down communication and authority. They exert controls over the allocation of time and resources, rules and procedures, rewards and punishments associated with conformity and obedience, and the explicit and implicit expectations of authority inherent in higher levels of power. Hierarchical structures do not convey self discipline and intrinsic love of

learning but rather project the view that extrinsic forces are responsible for directing, motivating and molding students to fit into a perceived inflexible structure.

McGregor (1973) emphasizes the pervasiveness in the influence of cognitive emphasis and bureaucratic management manifested in time-tables and bells, student groupings into classes and/or streams, and the ritual homage paid to certain school values and symbols (pp. 307-308), to the exclusion of Native cultural symbols and values of wholeness and empowerment of the student. D'Urso (1978) argues that, what is less obvious, are the practices of curricular, methodological and evaluational processes of schooling which compartmentalize "real knowledge" in to the different subjects, the value of the knowledge being intrinsically within the subject matter; and the teaching method of "talk and chalk", being lectured to as reinforcing the authority of teachers and text books. The demand for attentiveness, discipline, grading, and the selection of questions and adequacy of the answers, are all within the authority of the teachers' judgment and form part of the curriculum control. D'Urso (1978) concludes that "The hidden curriculum of the school leads the young to internalize such norms as the hierarchical disposition of power and acquiescence in one's own powerlessness, compliance with authority, job fragmentation and extrinsic job motivation, and external direction and evaluation of one's work and worth" (pp. 47-52). The individuals worth is evaluated and determined by external sources and exceptions defined by a culture that is foreign to the Native student. This is done to the exclusion of communication with children and modelling (Native sense) rather than controlling through fear or guilt, but with interest.

A "hidden curriculum" of education marginalizes Native people(s), and it has marginalized anyone that does not fit the mold of expected norms of the dominant culture as defined by testing - a critical element of systemic inequitable learning opportunities. As noted critical scholars have variously described the educational milieu and provide a base for my understanding of the marginalizing or imbalancing mechanism implicit in the educational system. The school system acts as a selection, sorting and distribution mechanism-determining students'

future role in society. The selection aspect of this system is a shaming policy through its allocation of marks and assignment to particular class levels of achievement. Suzanne's story, provides a graphic example of shaming – "I scraped bottom that year, so I was at the far end of row three most of the year. I learned about the pecking order, it was humiliating."

The process begins in primary school, with tracking and streaming of students through assessing pupil's academic progress through promotion policies, and in does not end until the completion of compulsory schooling. At the end of the compulsory schooling process, students who continue their education are sorted for university, colleges and other institutions. Those who have survived the selection process through high school have already been sorted for the work force. For functionalists, the sorting process is a "rational way" of selecting talented students so that, in the words of Hurn (1978) "the most able and motivated attain the highest status position" (cited in Hewitson, 1982, p. 3). In other words the ones who fit the prescribed mold of achievement are rewarded. The sorting role of schools is taken-for-granted and so is the assumption that the educational system is working fairly by rewarding individual merit with privileges, power, and wealth, all of which are attached to high social status.

Lingard (1978) elaborates that, although children enter school from all sorts of social class backgrounds, and I would add cultures, the school system determines their future social role by providing the opportunity for upward and downward mobility on the basis of merit. The importance of schools to the students' future is widely acknowledged. Esland (1971) argues that all societies have to find some way of servicing the basic function of society by allocating people to jobs (p. 11), rather than having the interest of the student determine what job is desirable. Hurn (1978) states that, many argue that the real function of schooling is "to teach the values, attitudes, and personality characteristics appropriate to adults in contemporary society" (pp.190-191). Hurn (1978) disagrees, however suggesting instead that "schools teach particular kinds of knowledge that do not necessarily have a direct functional relevance to the performance of adult roles in

modern society" but persist because of the prestige attached to them (p. 191). "In this sense much of what schools teach is quite arbitrary in functional terms" (Hurn, 1978, p. 191).

As noted, for others the institution of schooling embodies a hidden curriculum intended, not to sort students into occupational categories according to merit, but to preserve existing social class structures and the dominant values of the wealthy and powerful. Gracey (1967) contends that education "must be considered one of the major institutions of social life" and as a "secondary institution, one in which people are prepared for life in society as it is presently organized" (p. 1). From this view, the present system of schooling comprises a pattern of roles defined and perpetuated by people with beliefs, values and biases that conform to the dominant ideology. The school system becomes an instrument designed to inculcate the approved values and ways of thinking into successive generations of children (Edgar, 1975, p. 8).

What these theorists perceive are the means of transmitting acceptance of existing social and economic inequities through the hidden curriculum. What is suggested is that the school is one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social patterns by providing an apparent justification of social inequalities. Bourdieu, (1976, p. 32); and Illich (1973, p. 64) see schools as means of providing credentials. Research has shown that academic success at school is consistently related to social class background (Taft, 1975, p. 21). Consequently, children of higher socio-economic status families (parents who have credentials and are convinced of the universal value of academic credentials) are most likely to perpetuate these values in their offspring, and provide the financial means, tutoring, demand for achievement and understanding of the selection process necessary for success in school. One wonders if Ruth, were from another social class whether she and her daughter would have received the auditory and visual teaching techniques they needed? Since scholastic achievement is socially defined by strict academic criteria, scholastic success is awarded to those who demonstrate the prescribed academic excellence – that is, those who fit the mold or have been shaped appropriately. The result is that teachers, pupils, and parents explain success and failure, or the inequality of education, in terms

of the natural (genetic) ability of students. Bourdieu & Saint Martin (1974) see the "The hidden curriculum as transferring the socio-economic privileges of birth (status) into ability differences which have been bestowed on students by nature" (p. 339).

In another analysis of education, Bowles and Gintis (1976) argue that the nature of Western capitalist society and capitalist schooling are determined by "the prerogatives of capital and imperatives of profit" (pp.125-143). The hidden curriculum differentially socializes individuals into accepting their place at various levels of the occupational structure for which the private enterprise economy needs manpower. There is an ulterior motive in compulsory schooling, that is to provide a workforce qualified to meet the needs of industry, rather than to satisfy ideals of equality of educational opportunity or the need to educate the citizenry to intelligently participate in the democratic process. Exposure to the hidden curriculum begins in the home where socialization patterns are determined by parents' experiences in the workplace, since there is a close correspondence between social relations of family life and social relations of the workplace. In a Native context we saw from Deanna's, Mary's and Ruth's stories that the socialization patterns were conditioned by residential schools, day schools and their effects on the family as the "residential school syndrome" which has been passed on from one generation to another. This process relegated them to a position of poverty, physical, sexual, and spiritual abuse and a menial working class status.

Grannis (1974) sees similarities between students from working class school districts, who are generally socialized and educated, to expect "right" answers from the teacher and accept them without question, as similar to performing routine work assignments that require the following of orders and never asking questions, as the prerequisites of working environments. The working class schools are preparing their students primarily for just those jobs. The middle class students are being prepared for management positions; hence, the schools are simply perpetuating existing class divisions. The following quote supports the assertion that Native students were treated differently by some teachers:

> But while my home life was happy, my school days were miserable. I attended a public school where I was made aware daily of the gap between my family's standard of living and that of my non-Indian classmates. At school I concentrated on surviving with some of my dignity intact; actually learning anything was secondary. At first I was bright and eager to learn, but either the teachers or the other students did not reciprocate my initial openness. My relationship with teachers was combative. They expected me to do poorly academically. I received little encouragement or help. ... I learned not to expect smiles from teachers. ... I could expect to be treated curtly and summarily, without warmth or respect. The teachers appeared to share the view of Indians held by the priests and nuns in the residential school of my father's era, ... (Fournier & Crey, 1997, p. 28)

Pedersen, Faucher and Eaton (1978) demonstrate that when teachers treat students differently because of the higher or lower expectations they set for them, it not only affects the student's achievement in school but their success in adult life (p. 29). Their "findings displayed a positive correlation between one first-grade teacher and the adult success of children from a disadvantaged urban neighborhood" (p. 29). The critical finding was that a "a good teacher shapes both the academic self-concept and achievement of the pupil so that an initial foundation yields cumulative benefits in later stages of life" (p. 29). This suggests that differential treatment by teachers elicits differential responses by students in the direction of teacher expectations (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968:128-129). Rist's (1970), study illustrates the "self-fulfilling prophecy"; if the teacher expects high performance, she receives it, and vica versa" (p. 415). Those students that demonstrated an "ease of interaction among adults; high degree of verbalization in standard English; the ability to become leaders; a neat and clean appearance; coming from a family that is educated, employed, living together, and interested in the child; and the ability to participate well as a group" possessed the characteristics expected to succeed while those who did not were expected to fail. Brophy and Good (1970) logically extend the idea of differential response of teachers to the school milieu and see the social culture as constituting the "hidden curriculum of discrimination", founded on the authority of middle class and academic

values, against those with different backgrounds and world views incompatible with the authorities' expectations of good students (p. 129). Student strategies intended to cope with differential treatment and the hidden curriculum have been captured in Oleson and Whittaker (1970) in the concept of "Studentmanship": the norms, understandings, maneuvers and evaluative strategies developed by students to maximize their chances of gaining teacher approval, academically and socially. They suggest that studentmanship is pervasive in the education system from infant school to doctoral level (pp. 215-216). "Successful studentmanship recognizes that many of the rewards and punishments presented as if they are being dispensed on the basis of academic success and failure, are really more closely related to mastery of the hidden curriculum" (Jackson 1968, pp. 34-36). Successful studentmanship in some cases is virtually impossible for Native students because of what Clifton and Roberts (1988) refers to as "appropriate teacher expectation and attitude". Teachers are key agents of socialization of culturally different children (Wilson, 1991). A teacher's prevailing attitude towards the child's potential and capability is transmitted to the child by means of gestures, and oral and written expressions, thus serving to create for the child the upper limits of functioning" (Rampaul, Singh & Didyk, 1984).

In the stories the students were faced with both negative and positive attitudes from the teachers they encountered. Where the interaction was positive they performed within the norm of the school. When the interaction was negative they appeared to evoke the conservation-withdrawal tactic and either dropped out of school, sought help from a supportive group, withdrew into another form of learning like art or reading, or resolved to get through it. Though the physical violence and the overt expressions of racial prejudice (displayed in residential schools) appear to have largely disappeared, Wilson (1991) found that there is still a significant difference in the way students are treated which is affected by location as well as teachers. Students reported that reserve teachers had high expectations and positive interaction with them whereas teachers in the mainstream school used for her study had little or no positive interaction with students. She reports that in this second school:

> Many students recounted experiences of having asked for help from teachers. They said they noticed that when other students asked for help, teacher would explain in detail, but that when Indian students were in need of help, the teachers would either simply write the answer on the chalkboard or give the answer very briskly and then move on without any explanation." (Wilson, 1991, p. 376)

We saw the same kind of teacher behaviour in Ruth's story. Teacher and student behaviour, particularly paraverbal, is perhaps more insidious than in the past because it is not explicit and may be perceived as a personal rather than racial dislike. Specific to the classroom, Wilson found that, in the case of native students, teachers would rigidly and unfairly uphold attendance policies which were very relaxed with other students and that there was a low level of interaction and attention given to Native students. Not only is this behaviour perceived as being unequal treatment and demeaning, but demonstrates the hidden curriculum of conditioning Native students to the kind of rule-following that would be required of a labourer. Students also endured racist comments from "white" students. Wilson spoke of areas in the school where Indian students were not supposed to be, and of remarks such as "I smell a strange smell in the hallway," (made by the white students) if they entered these areas. If Indian students wore new clothes to school, white students frequently remarked ... that welfare checks must have just been issued (Wilson, 1991, p. 376). She also relates how students were channeled into low level courses because it was assumed that they were unable to handle university preparatory work. For example, a student who wanted to enroll in a computer class was advised by the teacher that he take a mechanics course instead because, "there will always be old broken down cars to repair on the reserve, but I doubt there will ever be computers to work with" (p. 376). These attitudes contribute to the perpetuation and image of the "stupid Indian kid who will grow up to be the drunk Indian spending his life on welfare".

The delimiting feature of mainstream education is fundamentally contrary to native balance and harmony and a holistic oriented learning process. Those who learn in the prescribed fashion are considered intelligent while those who don't are considered slow learners. Attempting to identify the learning styles, "until recently researchers could only make conclusions about the learning process by carefully observing the outcomes of learning; what a person did as a result of learning," and because there was no way to observe the learning just the conditions that affected the outcomes of the studies (Browne, 1990). With further research it was determined that different people may have significantly different ways of learning, Gardner's (1993, 1998) theory of multiple intelligences identifies nine forms of intelligences and ways of learning. "Education ought to be so sculpted that it is responsive to these differences. Instead of ignoring them, and pretending that all individuals have (or ought to have) the same kind of minds, we should instead try to ensure that everyone receive an education that maximizes his or her own intellectual potentials" (Gardner, 1993: p.71). Cohen (1969 cited in Browne) combined results from a large body of research to identify two "incompatible conceptual styles" - relational and analytic. The analytic style is the formal style predominantly used in mainstream schools and is in direct conflict with the relational and thereby holistic style of learning of Aboriginal people(s) (Little Bear, 1986, pp. 244-245).

These differences in learning styles need to be considered when attempting to discover how best to teach a child. There are schools that have taken this issue into consideration and have geared their curriculum toward the educational and cultural needs of Native learners. Some mainstream schools have begun offering Native language courses , teaching Canadian history accurately, and have brought in Native counselors, but these schools are few and far between. But content is not enough. Teachers need to become cultural brokers (Wilson, 1997, p. 290).

Indigenous students continue to be documented as having low self-esteem and low ability. Studies have found that the self-concept and self-esteem of students is affected by ethnicity, culture, expectation, preparedness, deprecation of culture, and racism (Clifton & Roberts, 1988; Wilson, 1991). Students who are treated differently and with low expectations and who perceive themselves to be in an unsupportive environment suffer from low self-esteem (Clifton & Roberts, 1988, pp. 32-33). For these reasons it is important for educators to develop strategies which "build on rather than change the cultural dispositions of students and that emphasize being rather than doing, past and present rather than future, and harmony with nature rather than subjugation of nature" (pp. 32-33).

Historically, intelligence testing streamed students into groups in order to train them for the kind of jobs they would be most suited for, without regard to past experiences and opportunities. These tests were used to "legitimize" keeping immigrant and Aboriginal populations in the lower echelons of the social strata, thus maintaining the status quo (Marks, 1977). Students are still regularly streamed with little or no understanding of the factors which may alter the results of such tests. Rice (1995) states that:

> [intelligence tests] have been criticized primarily on the basis that they are not relevant for the purposes for which the tests are used. To succeed, a successful ...person needs drive and motivation, social adeptness, courage, patience, self confidence, practical wisdom, organizational and administrative ability, and a variety of skills, in addition to intelligence. It would be a mistake to assume that people of any age could be successfully evaluated ... only by test scores. Intelligence tests show a cultural and economic bias. They are more suited to middle-class ... than to minorities and low socioeconomic groups, who tend to score poorly because they are unfamiliar with the vocabulary and examples used (p. 539).

Rice lists several other factor, which may affect performance, including relevance, degree of motivation, personality traits, physical and emotional factors, and the relationship between the test administrator and the test taker. Sternberg (1988) says that intelligence is something that the majority culture creates to define what is good performance in that culture, and to account for

why some people perform better than others on the tasks that are valued in that culture. "Group differences in conventional test scores – which are common and tend to favor white students – therefore may be in part a function of the narrow range of abilities that standard tests favor" (Sternberg, 1998, p. 6). Mano Singham (1995) cites Gerald Bracey who says "We cannot say that I.Q. tests predict school failure, but rather that school failure predicts school failure..." (p. 273)

One of the factors which affects student achievement is their socio-economic status. Hull (1990) describes the link between socio-economic status and educational attainment. Students who are poor often do not eat well, get enough sleep, or have adequate clothing. They could also be influenced by seeing or directly experiencing such things as neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse, drug and/or alcohol abuse to varying degrees; all of which have been found to have a positive correlation with poverty. It can hardly be expected that those who live under these conditions will have the energy or the desire to excel in the classroom. Many Native people lived in poverty in the past and continue to do so. Some parents have little or no formal education, have no time, possibly no inclination, nor any idea how to prepare their children for schools which have a different life focus. Native parents essentially lack the "cultural capital" of the middle and upper classes required to substantially motivate their children in the Western World and they are, therefore, streamed into the vocational courses. In some cases Native people live lives of shame and native content in mainstream schooling is not enough.

Conclusion

When teaching Indigenous students consideration must be given to the generations of explicit and implicit shaping of Native students in the public educational system. In many ways we are all teachers and need to acknowledge our roles in the shaping of our children. We need to find a balance between shaping and modeling that will prepare the future generations to survive and face the challenges of our society. Content is not enough, we need to reduce the instances of shaming, acknowledge that there are different ways of teaching and learning, that people have

differentiated rates of learning, and that there are multiple forms of intelligences which need to be developed.

We need to acknowledge that there are culturally defined behaviours that create a social mind, that we live a life of feelings, and that Western cultural penetration of Indigenous culture creates marginal situations and marginal minds. The effects of the legacy of Western education of Indigenous students is still apparent today:

> Even those children who found ways to cope, or in some cases benefit from the School experience, were damaged by witnessing the abuse of others. Few children escaped with their cultural identity intact. And the impact on the communities left behind was severe. Displaced from their land, their villages sometimes literally depopulated of children, parents were vulnerable to the accelerated social and economic dissolution that affected virtually all reserves in Canada. Elders who had no one to receive their wisdom lost their reason for existence. Children returned home strangers who could trust no one; far from being "improved," they were demoralized, victimized and often unable to bond with their families or elders, so that their sad stories stayed locked within them. ... Graduates were also bedevilled by the rigid, authoritarian regime of the schools, which inevitably invaded their lives as adults. Some inflicted serious physical discipline on their own children, while others became overly lax and disorganized. The European clerics' ways of raising children was absolute obedience reinforced by shame, whipping and harsh denial – contaminated the traditional aboriginal childbearing tradition of modeling behaviour and never hitting a child. ... [S]urvivors who returned home from a miserable childhood of abuse and military-style discipline have found themselves still experiencing, decades later, symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder not unlike those suffered by war veterans or police officers. Panic attacks, insomnia, uncontrollable anger, alcohol and drug use, sexual inadequacy or addiction, the inability to form intimate relationships, eating disorders ... (Fournier & Crey, 1997, pp. 62-63).

I believe that, when some Indigenous students are confronted with situations such as direct confrontation, status projection, and judgement, they involuntarily or voluntarily respond with a conservation-withdrawal tactic. When these situations occur in a formal educational milieu and the conservation-withdrawal tactic is used, it is misunderstood by some teachers as low self-esteem or lack of motivation, or rebellion. However, some of the teachers in the stories

recognized this unsupportive environment and were instrumental in providing the students with an equal opportunity to reach their potential. The stories and supporting documentation illustrates how Indigenous inequitable learning opportunities arise, and point to the "hidden curriculum" as unrecognized by some teachers and students as a systemic condition of formal education. I believe when some Indigenous students are confronted with occasions that placed them "on the spot" to answer direct question, perceive the occasion to be confrontational, and ethically contrary to their beliefs and values that it "triggers" in their social mind memories of behaviour or shaming experiences that transform the occasion to a marginal situation. When they withdraw or respond to these marginal situations a learning opportunity is lost. The question might be answered by a shrug of the shoulders or "I don't know" or a rambling response, which is a clue that the question is not culturally appropriate and that the student may not have been given sufficient time to consider the response. When an Indigenous student has to withdraw inner-ward to reconcile his/her estrangement and malaise with the marginal situation, it is at this point again that the learning opportunity is lost. The focus is not on the educational learning opportunity but reconciling feelings. The situations are created by conventional methods of teaching, knowledge taught through the curriculum and learned from the "hidden curriculum", and forms of presentation and deadlines inherent in the educational system which create imbalance for some Indigenous students.

This study was undertaken for several reasons. To provide a means for Indigenous students to express their perceptions of formal schooling and acknowledge that are more Indigenous people in Canadian society than those legally defined by the Government. As the author of this study I am one of hundreds that have not been able to reconnect with their relatives and have become the "forgotten Indians". To acknowledge that different Indigenous cultural worldviews need to be recognized and respected as valued forms of knowledge. Intrapersonal intelligence allows one to understand and work with others, and merges as an inter- and intra-

personal components of a sense of self (Gardener, 1993, p. 25) when this is not recognized it damages that persons construct of themselves. Educational shaming and an unsupportive educational environment in this study created imbalance for Indigenous students and an inequitable learning situations that not only affect their academic performance but adult success. When a follow-up was conducted with the undergraduate students and the participants of the study they stated that the marginal man concept was helpful for their understanding of cultural penetration and their need for deconstruction and reconstruction of information. The openness, unfettered and heart felt sharing of the participants stories suggests that the protocols and Native ethics used in the research were appropriate as a research methodology in Native communities.

In conclusion, the phenomenon discussed in this study indicates that cultural affiliations affect educational achievement. Those situated on the cusp of two cultures historically have been shamed through use of inappropriate teaching techniques and in many cases through blatant racism. Today's educational leaders and policy makers must take into account that unrecognized learning opportunities are derived from unethical culturally based and biased behaviours. This study lends support for sensitivity training of teachers who teach Native children, so as to increase their awareness of the educational needs of Native students. It is time to close the circle and begin the healing process in Native education. The practices of shaming must cease and cultural brokering instituted as we enter a new millennium.

Epilogue

We need to write a new story that moves beyond guilt, blame and shame and seriously assess our roles as "becoming human beings" in this unfolding story. In the dark recesses of my memory I've been told stories by different Elders but they all had the same message:

ELDER WISDOM

That we are only just becoming!
We have only been on this earth a short while.
We are still learning!
How to be a human being.
We are still learning!
How to respect all living things.
We are still learning!
How to honour our past, present and future.
We are still learning!
How to understand our feelings.
We are still learning!
That everything is connected.
We are still learning!
To let children become.
We are only just becoming!

Wayne MacDonald-Gorman

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